Queer Things about London

CHARLES G. HARPER.

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QUEER THINGS ABOUT LONDON

STRANGE NOOKS AND CORNERS OF THE GREATEST CITY IN THE WORLD

BY

CHARLES G. HARPER

Illustrated by the Author

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J. B. LIPPINCOTT COMPANY

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TO

BERNARD KETTLE

Librarian of the Library of the Corporation of the City of London
Guildhall

OLD FRIEND

Your help when I prepared my first manuscript for the printer is not forgotten : nor what I have increasingly owed you since. Indeed, I owe to you more than ever you have suspected, or I can repay. This is a dark saying but true. And since again, in talking over what these following pages were to be, I have profited by your additions to my own recollections of the City of London, and by your expert knowledge of what the Guildhall Library contains, it is only right and proper that, as you aided in αλφα, so this acknowledgment, it seems to me, is fittingly to be made in what may be ωμεγα : whose chapters derive from you something as well.

CHARLES G. HARPER

March, 1923

Preface

I cannot claim that many of the "Queer Things" treated of in these pages are 'unknown.' It would be very queer indeed if they were. But most of them are but little considered and not greatly visited except by those whose business lies that way.

It is the habit among the writers of books to deplore the indifference of Londoners to the objects of interest in London. It is a bad habit, for it is insincere. For my part, I feel extremely glad that Londoners do not come in crowds to see these interesting things. Thus there is all the more room and quiet for me and my kind where those things of interest are. I should not like to be obliged, for example, to wait in a queue to see the Westminster Waxworks; and it would be deplorable if crowds thronged to see Domesday Book in the museum of the Public Record Office, because if they did the Government would wake up and make a charge for admission. As few ever go to see it, the sight is free.

So all is well. I hope, and think, my book will be read; but the reading of it will not help

to crowd the places described, because the arm-chair is comfortable and sight-seeing is a tiring affair.

I have to thank Messrs. Chapman & Hall, Ltd., for permission to reproduce the pictures by Mr. Lewis Weirter illustrating the chapter on St. Paul's Cathedral.

March, 1923 CHARLES G. HARPER

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Queer Things about London

CHAPTER I

UP WEST

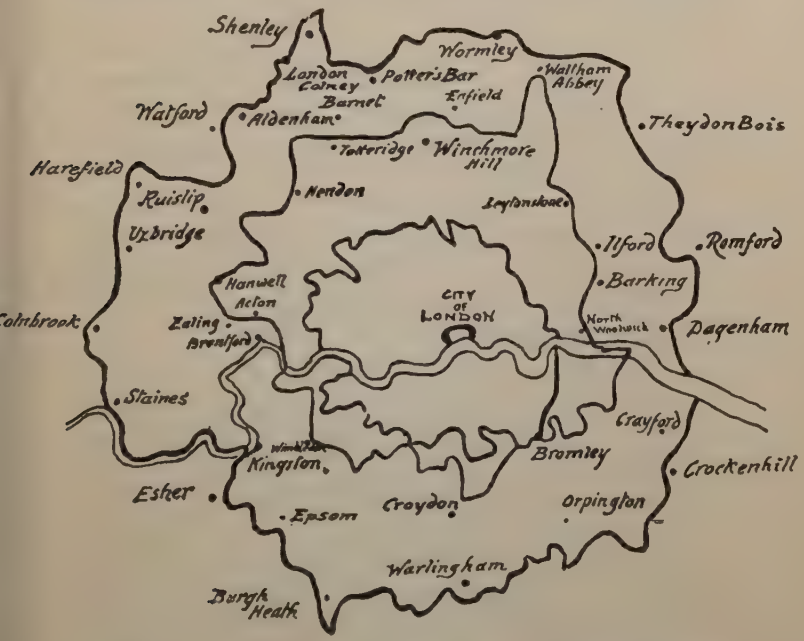
Londoners do not, perhaps, notice their great city to be full of the oddest survivals, alike of strange buildings, visible relics, curious nooks and corners and customs. In these later days they do notice more particularly that it is increasingly full of traffic and very difficult indeed to walk its pavements in comfort. They observe that the omnibuses nowadays form an almost continuous procession along its chief routes; and it is borne in upon them, all day and every day, that it is dangerous to attempt any street-crossing without first very carefully calculating the pace of oncoming vehicles.

But they do not know much about the interesting and often amusing story of the city wherein they live. They are born into it; they find in it their business and livelihood. For curiosity, and to be really interested, they expend their leisure elsewhere.

Now, the visitor from America and other foreign lands, and the provincials who come up to London, actually do see it; and not infrequently they can tell Londoners something about their own London. And—a matter in these extremely commercial times of much greater importance to the majority of people—the folk who come up to town from the country or the provincial cities and towns do very often see business chances where the true-born Londoner never suspects them. Who are they who found the new and often hugely successful business? Londoners? No, indeed; for they perceive only the risks and not the chances.

Let us, to make a beginning, enter the capital from the West; and in so doing note what is perhaps the queerest thing, historically, about London. It is, in short, that this great Imperial city, capital of the world's greatest Empire, is not the capital also (or the "county-town," as the school-books would say) of the county of Middlesex, in which it is chiefly situated. That distinction historically belongs to Brentford. Thus we have the quaint paradox that, while the London County Council (an entirely upstart and as yet unhistorical body) is the chief authority in the newly constituted "County of London," there is yet the County Council of Middlesex (whose Guildhall is at Westminster, within the territory of the London County Council); while Brentford has yet a shadowy 'capital' dignity of its own; although it has merely the appearance

of a little, and very shabby, country town, which is not even corporate and never owned so dignified a personage as a Mayor, although its markets date back to 1307, and in spite of the implied



importance from 1700 until 1832 of being the polling-place for the Middlesex elections to Parliament.

The 'London' of to-day is defined in various ways by different authorities. The London County Council's 'London' area differs from that of the General Post Office, and those again are not identical with the frontiers of London as

understood by the Registrar-General's returns, or by the Metropolitan Police. The boundaries of the County Council run round by Shepherd's Bush, Harlesden, Kilburn, Cricklewood, Child's Hill, East Finchley, Totteridge, Hornsey, Finsbury Park, Stamford Hill, Clapton, Hackney, Forest Gate, Ilford, East Ham, Plumstead, Shooter's Hill, Chislehurst, Hayes Common, Upper Norwood, Purley, Norbury, Lower Tooting, Merton, and Barnes.

The General Post Office conception is that of a London bounded by Ilford, Wanstead, Woodford, Chingford, Winchmore Hill, Totteridge, Highwood Hill, Willesden, Hanwell, Mortlake, Wimbledon, Purley, and Blackheath.

The Metropolitan Police consider 'London' to be defined as consisting of "parishes any part of which is within eleven miles, or of which the whole is within fifteen miles of Charing Cross." This generous interpretation implies some singularly rustic beats for some members of "The Force," and some exceedingly lonely and unpleasant night-watches, for the circuit runs by Dagenham on the East, through High Beech, and so on by Wembley, Northaw, Shenley, Potter's Bar, London Colney, Aldenham, Watford, Batchford Heath, Harefield, Uxbridge, West Drayton, Colnbrook, Wraysbury, Staines, Laleham, Walton, Esher, Burgh Heath, Tattenham Corner on Epsom Downs, Chipstead, Warlingham, Downe, Orpington, Crockenhill, North Cray, Bexley and Crayford.

UP WEST

If we elect to enter London from the West through Brentford and the Chiswick High Road, passing through Turnham Green we enter the 'London' of the County Council in the region of that well-known spot "Young's Corner." The actual boundary runs through a street on the right called "British Grove."

So shall we come through Hammersmith to Kensington.

There are many queer things about "the old Court suburb," the present "Royal Borough of Kensington," so-called because it contains a Royal Palace. The visitor who enters the newspaper-room of the Public Library in the High Street, a building formerly the Vestry Hall, will notice on the wall, in a glass case, an old flint-lock blunderbuss, to which belongs a curious history. For many years it was the custom for a watchman to patrol at night the extensive grounds of the neighbouring Holland House, the seat of Lord Holland, armed with this weapon. At last a night came when he forgot to reload it, and that same night he was attacked, and, being unable to defend himself, he was murdered. His successors were strictly enjoined to fire off the gun every night, in front of the mansion, at eleven o'clock, and to reload. Thence arose the custom, well remembered by old inhabitants of Kensington, of nightly discharging that fire-arm. It was not finally discontinued until 1874.

Along High Street and Kensington Gore, the

most pleasant of all entrances to London, we come to the Albert Hall, on the right, and the Albert Memorial on the left. The Albert Hall, intended chiefly for musical purposes, is so dismal a failure that it is quite certain any oratorio or other great musical effort there will be absolutely and completely ruined. In the Albert Hall, when first it was opened, was installed the earliest lift in London. It was then called "the moving room," and was of a very considerable size.

The Albert Memorial, standing prominently in Kensington Gardens (for it is no shy and secretive monument) is a cause of scorn and scoffing. There sits the Prince, in huge monstrous effigy, beneath a Gothic canopy, and presiding over a plinth adorned with relief figures in white marble, representing all that ever was great in science and art, literature and music, in the history of the world. It is as though the intention were to suggest he patronized and nursed the genius of Shakespeare, of Milton, Vandyck, Purcell, and innumerable others! Those figures and the groups of Asia, Africa, Europe and America are the best parts of the Memorial. Of late years the gigantic figure of the Prince has been cleared of its original gilding, and so it can no longer merit the name it was given, "the Golden Calf." The Memorial cost £132,000, and the upkeep of it occasionally forms a heavy charge.

This is an introduction to Knightsbridge and Knightsbridge Barracks, rebuilt about 1879.

They are cavalry barracks. It was in the old "Duke of Wellington's Riding School," on July 27th, 1878, on the occasion of a banquet given to celebrate the return with "Peace and Honour" of Lords Beaconsfield and Salisbury from Berlin that Lord Beaconsfield made a speech in which he denounced Gladstone as: "A sophistical rhetorician, inebriated with the exuberance of his own verbosity, gifted with an egotistical imagination that can at all times command an interminable and inconsistent series of arguments to malign his opponents and glorify himself."

So to the western boundary of the 'London' of whose queer incidents these pages are to tell. It is much nearer the heart of things. It is, indeed, what long was called "Number One, London," the residence of the Duke of Wellington, Apsley House, Hyde Park Corner.

There the great Duke, the victor of Napoleon, was to be publicly seen, crossing the road, or riding his horse, for many years, by an enthusiastic people. A singular mixture of hauteur and modesty, that great man, who, asked to describe the Battle of Waterloo, could only say that it was "a damned near thing." He disliked the crowds observing him mounting his horse in the paved fore-court behind the railings of his house, so he had them (the railings, I hasten to add, not the crowds) covered with sheet iron. This was removed by his son and successor, who modestly realised that he, at any rate, was not great.

"No one," said he, "is in the least likely to wish to see me get on *my* horse."

Yet the old Duke had his prejudices. Some very specially stupid person, as it was said, one day accosted him with, "Mr. Johnson" (or Thompson, was it ?), "I believe."

Personally I have nothing against the Johnsons or the Thompsons: they are, numerously, individually and collectively, estimable citizens. But the Duke, not easily to be taken for anyone but himself, resented this address.

" If you believe that," said he " you'll believe anything!"

" Number One, London " has, in the continued expansion of the metropolis, long since ceased to have that appearance of standing where London on this side begins; but in those times, when Knightsbridge was rural and Kensington in the country, the mansion stood there, at Hyde Park Corner, like an imposing entrance. Opposite, the Iron Duke could for years look up at the Arch into the Green Park and see there, cresting it, the bronze Duke on his horse, in gigantic size and hideous design. The statue, removed in 1884 to Aldershot, was replaced by that great group now there, the Quadriga, with its emblematic figure of Peace, the work of Captain Adrian Jones, presented by Lord Michelham. Intended to celebrate the hundred years since the peace following Waterloo, it was set up just in time to witness the outbreak of the World War, actually in the ninety-ninth year. And,

at this time of writing, there is no Peace worthy the name.

So, that great group against the skyline does instead seem like a sardonic commentary, and the winged figure with her wreath appears rather to be on her way to deposit it on the tomb of peace and goodwill.

Apsley House introduces us to Piccadilly, that one great thoroughfare of London comparable in some ways to Prince's Street, Edinburgh; a street one-sided, its one row of houses looking out upon a view always charming.

> " Gay shops, stately palaces, bustle and breeze,
> The whirling of wheels, and the murmur of trees;
> By night, or by day, whether noisy or stilly,
> Whatever my mood is—I love Piccadilly."

Not great poetry, but pleasant. The lines are by Frederick Locker-Lampson. About 1878 was issued, but not established, for it died young, a ' Society ' weekly paper called *Piccadilly*. The cover of it was by Du Maurier. The design represented the Park side of Piccadilly and the tall plane-trees there. The last of the four lines of verse already quoted appeared on the cover.

It is just here you may see that curious relic the " porter's rest," a shelf shoulder-high, with an inscription proclaiming its use : " At the suggestion of R. A. Slaney, Esq., who for twenty years represented Shrewsbury in Parliament, this porter's rest was erected in 1861, by the Vestry of St. George, Hanover Square, for the benefit of porters and others carrying burdens. As a relic of a past period in London's history, it is hoped

that the people will aid in its preservation." The older name of these so-called "porters' rests" is "fardel-rest," as appears in old documents of the City of London, where they originated as resting-places where the apprentices could halt and recover their breath, exhausted by the loads their masters imposed upon them. "Who would fardels bear," asks Hamlet, "to grunt and sweat? . . ."

A fardel-rest stood until recent years in the Old Bailey.

From this it would appear either that the rest is a replica of one formerly on this site, or that "porters' rests" once were common in London. Until a few years ago, one was to be seen on the north side of St. Paul's Churchyard, beside the bar that still is placed across the roadway.

Almost every house in Piccadilly has a history, but these pages are not the place to tell the long story of a street, its shops and mansions and clubs. There is, though, a club in Piccadilly that should be mentioned, although it finds no place in directories. It is the "Junior Turf Club," opposite the Naval and Military, and Bath House. It is the name given by wags to the cabmen's shelter on that spot.

Piccadilly has not changed sufficiently for its character to be altered, although it is true that much of it has been rebuilt. Where now stands the Ritz Hotel there have been three successive buildings, very well within the recollection of people who are not aged. The Bath Hotel and

Hatchett's White Horse Cellars, modest, white-fronted, stood there. They gave place to a very lofty pile of red brick flats, "Walsingham House," and that, in its turn, after a very few years, made way for the stone 'Ritz.'

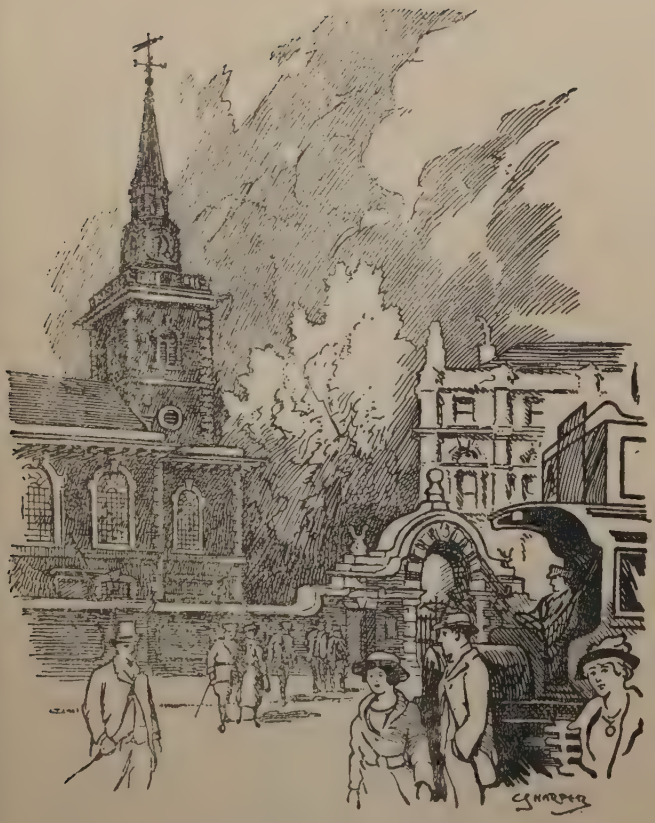
That exclusive warren—for labyrinthine and mazy it seems—the bachelors' chambers called 'Albany," is yet found, unaltered, on the north side of Piccadilly, in and beyond its court-yard. It is accounted, by those who reside here, a solecism to speak or write 'The' Albany. If you perpetrate that grave error, you cannot be 'one of us'; desolating thought! Albany, dating from about 1804, was affected from the very first by young men of wealth and fashion with a literary turn. Byron and Macaulay, "Monk" Lewis and George Canning, among many others, had chambers here. Bulwer Lytton, occupying the set once rented by Byron, wrote here many of his novels. His wife, Rosina, Countess of Lytton—and a precious handful, she was to be sure!—used to remark that he had once written to her to say he was here with Solitude. He spelled it thus, with a capital S, being great, in the literary way, in the matter of using capital letters. She paid him an unexpected call and found that Solitude well deserved the dignity of a capital letter, because the personification was sustained by a fair creature, fashionably dressed in white muslin, she found perched on his knee.

It was hard by Albany (I omit the definite

article, in the hope of being taken for one of them) that the consolidator of the Rothschilds' fortunes, old Baron Meyer de Rothschild, once dropped a penny on the pavement of Piccadilly. Characteristically enough, he sought long and anxiously (but vainly) for the coin, but it had rolled down a grating. He remarked sadly on the fleeting nature of riches. Meanwhile, a pickpocket had relieved him of his gold watch. Here, too, the impudent Beau Brummell, arbiter of fashion, stopped the Duke of Bedford and asked him, "Do you call *that* a coat?"

Look upon the house of Fortnum & Mason, opposite Burlington House, with respect, not only for the excellent bottled fruits, the intriguing hampers of good things in the windows of those old-established caterers, and not merely because of the antiquity of the business—it was founded in 1714— but for those war services you do not by any means suspect. Our army in the Crimea, alike officers and men, were in rags and ill-supplied by the official commissariat, but Fortnum & Mason got their hampers with such delicacies as *patés de foie gras* and bottled things safely to the front; and they did the like in the Boer War and the World War.

On that same south side of Piccadilly we come to St. James's Church, a work by Sir Christopher Wren. It is no great risk to assume either that Queen Elizabeth slept in any manor-house that may be named in the country, if only it be old enough; that Cromwell had a hand in dis-



St James's Church, Piccadilly

mantling any given castle, or that Wren designed most of the churches of his period in central London. St. James's is a picturesque red brick church, with a fine interior. The organ, built to the order of James the Second for the Chapel Royal, St. James's Palace, where he proposed to re-introduce the Roman Catholic religion, never found a place there. Queen Mary gave it to St. James's Church.

And so we come to Piccadilly Circus, where, I think, " Up West " may be said to end.

CHAPTER II

A KING'S RESTING PLACE

One might chatter to infinity about Soho, that curiously foreign quarter of central London between Soho Square and Leicester Square, and comprising Wardour Street. That street is where you can buy old furniture, old china, and old ancestral portraits. Not now cheaply. Despair your hope of anything cheaply to be bought to-day! But once you could purchase a gallery of old oil-portraits in Wardour Street and on the most favourable terms acquire forebears. The Major-General, in the *Pirates of Penzance*, stricken with grief at having declared himself an orphan, in order to deceive the trustful pirates, lamented in the ruined chapel to Frederic his having brought dishonour upon his ancestors.

"But you forget, sir," says Frederic, "you only bought the property a year ago, and the stucco on your baronial hall is scarcely dry."

The Major-General, ignoring Frederic's split infinitive, very properly replied: "In this chapel are ancestors. I don't know whose ancestors they *were*, but I do know whose they *are*!"

Well, then, in Soho you may see Frenchwomen shopping exactly as they do in France, bare-

headed, as no Englishwoman would. And the curious French grocers and other shops, and newspaper shops where strange foreign journals are for sale. A very interesting quarter, partly Italian, and thus full of queer little restaurants, in whose basements you suspect blackbeetles. Yet, every now and again, some writing person, like myself, discovers what he considers to be a quite decent, though obscure, restaurant of this type, and inexpensive. He chances the cockroaches. And he is filled with the explorer's joy of discovery, and writes about his find. Thus do the dim little places leap at times into fame and expand. But they cease to be inexpensive.

I have not, however, set out to describe Soho, but only to visit the grave of a king. There is in Wardour Street one of those weird eighteenth-century churches which, according to your mood and the weather, will look rather fascinating, or extremely gruesome. But they always look pagan. St. Anne's, Soho, is a prime exemplar of this type, and the tower of it is crested by a bulbous black clock, very odd indeed. The churchyard has for some years past been open as a public garden, and is beautiful with plane and poplar trees. There are seats, where the bone-idle and the unemployable, rather than the merely weary, rest, and on the flat tombstones young gamesters find it convenient to play pitch-and-toss, secure from the observation of the police.

Kings in exile and in poor circumstances have

never been rarities, and they are common to-day; but monarchs who have died in abject poverty, and but newly released from a debtor's prison, are rare indeed.

Such a sovereign, whose luck ran completely out, was Theodore, King of Corsica. But, although he was in fact a king, it is only right to add that he was only a king of sorts, the first and last of his line. Nor was he a Corsican, but a Prussian. Originally Stephen Theodore, Baron von Neuhoff, in the service of Charles the Twelfth of Sweden, he extended to the inhabitants of that troubled island some much needed protection, and they in 1736 offered him the crown. He accepted, but it was not a dignity without cares. He could not, in fact, find money to pay his army, and after some years of difficulties he came to London, in search of financial aid. Fifty pounds was all he collected, and, because he was soon in debt, he presently found himself in prison, from which he was released only on the terms of registering his kingdom as an asset, for the benefit of his creditors, to whom he owed only some £400. He then found refuge, penniless, with a tailor in Little Chapel Street, Soho, but fell sick the next day and died December 11th, 1756. The tailor, who had known him of old, had given him a shelter, but it was left for an oilman in Compton Street to pay for his funeral, less from compassion than for the satisfaction of being able to declare he had experienced the honour of burying a king.

St. Anne's, Soho

A KING'S RESTING PLACE

And so there may to this day be seen on the exterior wall of St. Anne's tower, King Theodore's epitaph. It was written by Horace Walpole, that amateur of the quaint and curious, to whom this history must strongly have appealed :

Near this place is interred
THEODORE, KING OF CORSICA,
who died in this parish, Dec. 11th, 1756,
immediately after leaving the King's Bench Prison,
by the benefit of the Act of Insolvency, in
consequence of which he registered
his Kingdom of Corsica for the
use of his creditors.

The grave—great teacher!—to a level brings
Heroes and beggars, galley-slaves and kings;
But Theodore his moral learn'd ere dead,
Fate poured its lesson on his living head—
Bestowed a kingdom and deny'd him bread.

Nothing appears as to whether the people of Corsica honoured the assignment of their island, or if Theodore had the power to assign. Nor are we informed if the creditors obtained their £400.

CHAPTER III

LONDON: THE GARDEN CITY

LONDON, to many people who ought to know better, is "dirty London"; merely the great city of many square miles of buildings overhung with smoke and with a sky raining "blacks" and smuts. That is a superstition, long surviving from times before the cleaner method of electric lighting and heating qualified the once almost intolerable conditions. Many Londoners can well recollect the extremely substantial "blacks" that would float in at open windows and render clean curtains and furnishings speedily very dirty, but, although we still occasionally experience fogs and darknesses in winter, when no wind stirs to blow the canopy of chimney-smoke away, certainly the "blacks" of former years have departed. London is 'dirty' only relatively. Our theory of relativity in this connection involves not merely a comparison with the clean air of the country, but also with the skies and atmosphere of places that are, wholly without cavil, notoriously and shamefully dirty: St. Helens, Widnes, Sheffield, Glasgow, Leeds.

Apart from this vexed subject, there is that uninformed impression that London—that vast,

sprawling mass of stone, brick and mortar—is lacking in trees and gardens. It used to be an unshakable article of belief with country cousins that this was exactly so: that to visit London you left behind everything belonging to the country. No grass, no trees, no flowers; that was the imaginary picture drawn for the benefit of such as were rash enough to propose living there to seek an occupation. Imagination scarce went so far with those simple souls as to suggest that anyone could reside in London for pleasure.

But how different the reality! It will be admitted, even by the most grudging, that the sun does actually sometimes shine in the Strand, and that from Fleet Street it is occasionally possible to perceive very distinctly the gilded cross on the summit of St. Paul's dome.

I will make a concession if you will do the like. If you will concede the sunshine I will admit that on occasions in winter you cannot, for fog, "see your hand before your face." But with this reservation, that those super-fogs—those pea-souper fogs, if you like—are now extremely rare. And never are they of that fruity, sulphurous, choking kind once described by Dickens as "a London particular."

As for London's trees and gardens and wide-spreading parks, with its old-established, well-wooded squares, the great city is in that respect indeed a garden-city among cities. Even in the very heart of the City of London, in Cheapside, under those Bow bells that recalled Whit-

tington, bidding him "turn again," there is a tree: a very fine tree too. It is the famous "lime tree at the corner of Wood Street," which from spring to early autumn gives a peculiarly rural air to that immediate turning. It stands in a little plot of ground that was of old the churchyard of St. Peter in West Cheap. The three small shops and houses that stand overhung by those branches are perhaps ancient encroachments on consecrated ground. In any case, the leases of them contain covenants restricting further building there.

The lime tree is additionally famous from having, it always has been held, inspired Wordsworth, who in 1799 wrote his poem, "The Reverie of Poor Susan," although the tree is not specifically mentioned:

"At the corner of Wood Street when daylight appears,
Hangs a thrush that sings loud, it has sung for three years;
Poor Susan has passed by the spot, and has heard
In the silence of morning the song of that bird.
'Tis a note of enchantment; what ails her? She sees
A mountain ascending, a vision of trees,
Bright volumes of vapour through Lothbury glide,
And a river flows on through the vale of Cheapside."

Touching indeed. I am sorry for Poor Susan, but infinitely more pitiful for the caged thrush; for Susan, a human being, had free volition, but the bird was denied. Yet Wordsworth does not seem to have spared a thought for that songster.

There is even a garden within the Bank of England's enclosure. It also is the site of an old churchyard. There are trees, and a fountain lazily splashes.

The plane is peculiarly the London tree: a fact not only recognised in the planting of the Victoria Embankment, but also in innumerable parks and gardens and suburban streets. It, to a certainty, flourishes where perhaps other species might grow anæmic. This, according to arboriculturists, is because of the plane's habit of shedding its bark, thus relieving itself of whatever grime might congest its pores:

"Green is the plane tree in the square,
The other trees are brown;
They droop and pine for country air,
The plane tree loves the town.

Here from my garret-pane I mark
The plane tree bud and blow,
Shed her recuperative bark
And spread her shade below.

Among her branches, in and out,
The City breezes play;
The dun fog wraps her round about,
Above the smoke curls grey.

Others the country take for choice,
And hold the town in scorn;
But she has listened to the voice
On City breezes borne."

Thus wrote Amy Levy, a London poet who died young, some twenty-three years ago.

Temple Gardens, still pleasantly in existence, is historic, for there Shakespeare sets the stage of the first quarrel between the rival Houses of York and Lancaster:

Suffolk:
Within the Temple Hall we were to land;
The garden here is more convenient. . . .
Plantagenet:
Let him that is a true-born gentleman,
And stands upon the honour of his birth,
If he suppose that I have pleaded truth,
From off this briar pluck a white rose with me.
Somerset:
Let him that is no coward, nor no flatterer,
But dare maintain the party of the truth,
Pluck a red rose from off this thorn with me.
Plantagenet:
Hath not thy rose a canker, Somerset?
Somerset:
Hath not thy rose a thorn, Plantagenet? . . .
Warwick:
This brawl to-day,
Grown to this faction in the Temple Gardens,
Shall send, between the red rose and the white,
A thousand souls to death and deadly night.

Roses no longer grow in Temple Gardens, but trees still greatly flourish there; and the plane trees in the paved and narrow space of Pump Court are noisy at every sunset with innumerable starlings, a species of bird which of late years has found London to be a place as hospitable as the sparrow ever has found it. But the place of places now to hear the starlings is the portico

of the British Museum. It acts as a sounding-board, and, both for that reason, and on account of their numbers, the din is extraordinary.

The seagulls, too, have discovered London. They came first in the Great Frost of 1891, driven inland by the rigours of the weather, and they have never forgotten the warm-hearted welcome Londoners gave them. To-day, all along the river, as far as Richmond and Kingston, the gulls are a feature.

Equally beautiful with the gardens of the Temple are those of Gray's Inn, where some of the venerable elms planted by Bacon, as well as the famous catalpa tree, still exist. It was on July 4th, 1597, that the Benchers of the Society of Gray's Inn ordered that "the summe of £7 15s. 4d., due to Mr. Bacon, for planting of elm-trees in the walkes, be paid next term." In the following year more trees were planted, at a cost of £60 6s. 8d. It is only of recent years that the rooks, long numerously established here, deserted their ancient rookery. Those wise birds knew that the trees were no longer safe.

Rarely ever is the Londoner out of sight of some tree. There are, indeed, districts in London where one may take a country walk as pleasant as any a hundred miles away. It is a two-and-three-quarter miles' walk in a straight line, between Notting Hill Gate and Storey's Gate, Westminster, through Kensington Gardens, Hyde Park, and the Green and St. James's Parks;

and it is not a formal walk, either, but one of beauty and interest.

Beginning with the lovely Dutch garden at the back of Kensington Palace, and passing by the stately red-brick Orangery designed by Sir Christopher Wren, and thence passing by the Round Pond, resort of model-yacht sailors, you come, it may be, among the ancient elms, by the ivied keeper's cottage amidst its flower beds, and thence across the bridge dividing the Long Water and the Serpentine (which ceased to be serpentine when it was remodelled a hundred and ninety years ago); and so, by the shores of that water, until the Dell is reached.

The Dell is the children's delight, and that of innumerable idlers also, for there, on the enclosed lawns in that pleasant hollow, the rabbits sport, and strange birds have their home. The Dell was the creation of that great gardener, Lord Redesdale. Here, too, will be noticed a great standing stone, like some monument of Druidical worship. But it is nothing of that sort. It was quarried near Liskeard, in Cornwall, in 1862. The quarrying occasioned the death of a man named Sandby.

From Hyde Park Corner, with the interval of only one thoroughfare, this country walk in mid-London is resumed, until, across the Mall and by the charming suspension-bridge over the lake, you come in view of one of the finest architectural groups in London; that of the Foreign Office block of buildings, with the

picturesque skyline of Whitehall Court to the left. Seen on a summer day, with the waters of the lake in the foreground, it has an exotic quality. The suspension-bridge dates from 1857. It cost £4,500. In 1911 it was pro-

THE WINDMILL, BRIXTON HILL

posed to replace it with a much more elaborate structure, in connection with a grandiose scheme for a memorial to King Edward the Seventh, which included a statue and a road 60 feet wide cut across the Green Park to the chimney pots of Piccadilly. The fury of Londoners when it was proposed to alter the bridge caused the project to be abandoned.

And here, if you so please, that country walk ends. But it may be prolonged, if the fancy takes you, by the gardens of the Embankment, until the Temple itself is reached.

There is even a surviving windmill in a region well within what is now the London area. It is on Brixton Hill. There, in Cornwall Road, is the establishment of Messrs. Joshua & Bernard Ashby, corn-millers, founded in 1816 by their grandfather, who built the windmill. It stands amid rural surroundings of orchard and leafy yard, its tall black tower forming a strange contrast with the neighbouring suburban streets. But the windmill's sails are gone, and a gas-engine supplies the motive power instead.

CHAPTER IV

WESTMINSTER WAXWORKS

Not many people know that in Westminster Abbey there is, quite apart from the familiar historic monuments, a "waxwork show" of surpassing interest. It is not a large collection of waxwork effigies, for only eleven are on view, but what it lacks in numbers it easily gains in authentic antiquarian interest, for not only were the features of the deceased kings and queens and other great personages modelled mostly after casts taken of their actual lineaments, but the effigies are dressed in copies made at the time of the State robes they wore, or in the actual dress that belonged to them.

We shall find this singular company in the little room above the beautiful chapel of Abbot Islip, the first among those side-chapels on the left as you turn out of the north transept into the north choir aisle. Abbot Islip was privileged to lay the foundation-stone of Henry the Seventh's Chapel, and died, in the fullness of years, in 1532. On the frieze of his chapel will be seen the carved rebus which—in the quaint olden fashion—makes a punning picture on his name; the

representation of an eye, and a little human figure conjoined with a slip, or branch.

But Abbot Islip's requiem chapel had originally nothing to do with the Abbey waxwork show. That is there simply because the room above it seemed to be a convenient loft in which from time to time to place these effigies, when they had served their turn elsewhere.

For these robed figures once had their place publicly in the body of the Abbey. There they stood, for many years after the interment of their originals, beside their graves and monuments, and they were removed to this dim and obscure retreat only when their finery began to fade and grow more than a little too shabby for the full light of day.

The origin of this "Ragged Regiment," or "Play of Dead Volks," as in later centuries this collection came irreverently to be called, is found in a very ancient custom of carrying a robed portrait effigy, as lifelike as might be, at the funeral of the personage represented. This "lively effigy" as in the ancient phrase it was styled, was originally carved entirely and solidly in wood. At a later period, in order to look yet more "lively," the timber face of the figure was covered with boiled leather, moulded to the features and painted. But in course of time this "certain liveliness" (as the rather cryptic official messages during the Great War of 1914-18 phrased it) became in its turn not quite satisfactory to the more critical taste of the age.

It would seem, indeed, that these more exigent demands coincided with the dawn of the Renaissance, and that the more completely lifelike method of modelling in wax, later employed, was adopted in the time of Henry the Seventh. But that is merely a surmise, for the earliest of the Westminster effigies now exhibited is that of Charles the Second. The Queen Elizabeth is a reconstruction.

THE EFFIGY OF QUEEN ELIZABETH

The sovereigns and great personages were carried in procession to their long home in the Abbey on a 'herse': not a carriage, but a temple-like catafalque, of architectonic design, decked with banners and many candles, and preceded by the "lively effigy." After the funeral, the 'herse' and the effigy alike stood by the grave until, often a century or more afterwards, it seemed good to the Abbey guardians to retire it.

John Stow, the great sixteenth-century anti-

quary, well knew the Westminster effigies; but they were earlier figures than those we now see, and they have either vanished altogether, or exist only as mere fragments in cupboards. The poet Dryden, in 1658, mentions having seen the effigies of Edward the First, Henry the Fifth, Henry the Seventh, and others, all now gone. The Puritan rebels, in the time of Charles the First, seem to have stripped many of the figures of their robes.

We may, with a little imagination, conjure up a quite vivid picture of the curious aspect the Abbey must have presented while it yet remained the custom to station these portrait-figures beside the tombs of the great. There, most striking, we may well believe, of all, stood the queer figure of Charles the Second, in his State robes (as we see him yet, in the seclusion of the Chapel), side by side with General Monk, who contrived the Restoration of His Majesty in 1660. The General was represented in armour, and must have presented a fearsome sight when he grew somewhat knock-kneed and battered, and for very shame was hidden away. Both the King and the General were in glazed cases, as the King is yet, but General Monk, if existing at all, does so only in dismembered form, and decently hidden away. For a hundred and fifty years the effigy of Charles the Second stood by his grave, and then was placed upon the retired list. And, when that happened, his resting-place was without any monument, and so it remains, perhaps

not altogether without a kind of retribution, for the always impecunious king had appropriated to his own spendthrift uses the £70,000 voted by Parliament for a monument to his father, Charles the First, who lies in St. George's Chapel at Windsor, and, equally with his son, has no memorial. Of Charles the Second, Evelyn the diarist says, " He was buried without any manner of pomp, and soon forgotten."

More fortunate than Charles the First, General Monk has his monument, even though his effigy be gone.

Let us climb the not very many winding stone stairs to the presence of this select company, rendering our threepences on Mondays and Tuesdays, and sixpences on other days.

But first it must be recalled why and when this was first made an exhibition. It was at some time after the Restoration that the idea first took root. A good deal of interest had for a long while been taken in the figures, which were casually shown by the vergers, whose chance fees, it soon became evident to the not very well provided-for minor canons of the Abbey, were worth having; and so at last an indefinite charge was made and the proceeds divided between them. It would seem, according to the evidence of the *Ingoldsby Legends*, that the verger exhibiting the collection was accustomed, with " the cap of General Monk " in hand, to solicit from the visitors whatever they were pleased to give

for thus we read in those witty pages of the Reverend Richard Harris Barham:

> " I thought on Naseby, Marston Moor, and Worcester's
> ' crowning fight,
> When on my ear a sound there fell—it chilled me
> with affright,
> As thus, in low, unearthly tones, I heard a voice
> begin—
> ' This here's the cap of Giniral Monk ! Sir, please
> put summut in.' "

Included among the figures is one of Queen Elizabeth, but, while, of course, she as a sovereign is earlier in date than Charles the Second, the effigy is a reconstruction by the Dean and Chapter in 1760 of the dilapidated original. By that time the practice of making these funeral waxworks had died out, although only a few years before; but the receipts from the show had become a consideration not to be ignored, and hence it was thought well to reinstate a figure so popular as had been that of " Good Queen Bess."

Well, here they are, all safely behind glass. Queen Elizabeth, although, as we have seen, not absolutely authentic, we may take to be as faithful a reproduction of the original as the Dean and Chapter, as conscientious showmen, could manage, and she looks truly regal, although more than a trifle dirty; a Queen Regnant, in every poise of her, with that indomitable spirit, which made the nation love and mourn her, and her opponents describe her as a " tigress," animating the haughty face. She was a very old woman, and

indeed also a very vain one, when she died, in 1603; but it was only a year earlier that, to disappoint the expectations of her successor, the King of Scotland, she had caused the Scottish Ambassador to be, as he thought, secretly shown her "dancing high and disposedly," as if in full vigour.

The figure of Charles the Second, in his splendour of red and blue velvet, now gone somewhat misty, his rather battered hat, long flowing wig, and ruffles at the throat and on the wrists of genuine point-lace, wears a more mournful than merry look and a smudged nose, and his hands are in a kind of Lord-help-us pose. There is something of the usual stage Hamlet about the look of him. Or, if you could imagine the so-called "Merry Monarch," having had a night out, and appearing next morning at a police-court

in his draggled finery and with a bad headache, pleading guilty to having been drunk and disorderly and obstructing the police in the execution of their duty, this odd figure would then fully represent the incident.

Of course, this is not in the least to suggest that the effigy is anything but the highly interesting exhibit that actually it is.

Not less interesting and curious is the group of William the Third and Mary, in their State robes, and holding each a sceptre. A crown reposes on a cushion upon a pedestal between them. The group reminds us, or informs us, as the case may be, not only that the Dutchman, William the Third, was a little man, but that his wife, the daughter of James the Second, was a very tall and stately woman. She stands nearly six feet high, in this figure, and the undersized William hardly competes with her, even though he stands on a step.

Anne, homely in appearance, but magnificently attired, and crowned, is represented sitting, and with hair flowing over her shoulders. She looks quite the kind of person to have long been bullied, as she was, by the forceful Sarah Jennings, Duchess of Marlborough, and she nurses the orb almost as though it were one of her eighteen babies.

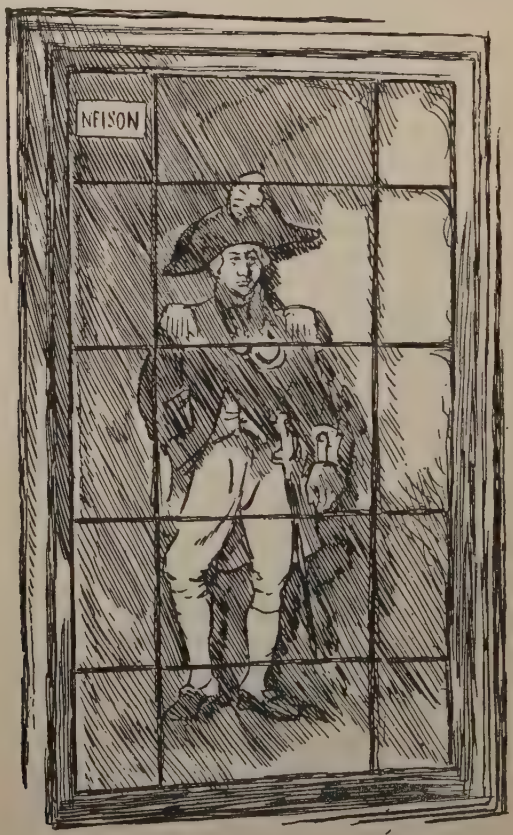
Close by is the figure of that beautiful Duchess of Richmond who, as " La Belle Stuart," sat for the figure of Britannia on our coinage in the reign of Charles the Second. She is seen in the actual

robes worn by her at the coronation of Queen Anne. A quaint and endearing feature is her pet parrot, beside her, said to have been hers for fifty years, and to have died only a few days after her.

The next figure, in order of date, is that of the young Edmund Sheffield, Duke of Buchinghamshire, who died at Rome in 1735. He lies, robed and coroneted, at full length, and has the appearance of recovering from a black eye. His mother, the Duchess of Buckinghamshire, who died in 1743, is represented with her younger son, the Marquis of Normanby. She is that eccentric character who was keenly eager to see and to superintend all the elaborate preparations for her own extremely stately funeral.

These are the latest of the effigies made genuinely for funeral display, for the practice soon afterwards ceased. But they are by no means the most recent. There are two others: portrait effigies of the great Earl of Chatham, 1778, and of Nelson, 1798, made especially as attractions for sightseers, and intended alike to bring the collection up to date and for the purpose of directly competing with that newer centre of attraction, St. Paul's Cathedral. They were made many years after that statesman and that great naval hero had been buried. If Nelson were indeed entombed in St. Paul's crypt, and if crowds went there to see his resting-place, at least the Dean and Chapter considered they should be able to see the Admiral, in his

habit as he lived, in the Abbey. And so they had him modelled, and secured some of his clothes,



and here he is. The coat appears to be the only article of the wearing apparel that was not genuinely Nelson's own.

This waxwork show remained popular until Madame Tussaud's original exhibition was opened, forming a more extensive and catholic collection of celebrities and notorieties. The Abbey authorities felt they could not compete with that, and so they added no more figures and the Westminster galaxy gradually faded out, of popular memory. But it remains of an historic interest not actually to be surpassed by any commercial showman's gallery, for it embodies a tradition wholly unconnected with entrance fees.

PEDLAR'S ACRE

From the Westminster end of the Victoria Embankment, looking across the river, there cannot fail to be noticed a gigantic modern public building, with a long river-front of striking design, and roofed with red tiles. It is the new County Hall of the London County Council, the stately palace in which the councillors who govern London have excellently well housed themselves, for their deliberations, at a cost to the community of some four millions sterling. The site of the County Hall is an excellent one for architectural effect, if not altogether convenient of access on that side of the river, but it is commonly understood to have been resolved upon less for the sake of convenience than from a curiously competitive spirit with Imperial Parliament. The composition of the London County Council has often, unhappily for London

ratepayers been a good deal more of the visionary political kind than of the purely civic practical economic sort, and ever since it was called into being the Council has, with rare exceptions, been jealous of Parliament and emulative of its powers. The deciding factor in the selection of this site was therefore to effect an architectural competition with the Houses of Parliament on the opposite side of the river: an outward and visible display of the inner and invisible spirit of that body.

The site of the London County Hall includes a famous and legendary plot of land: 'Pedlar's Acre,' consisting actually of one acre 19 poles, said to have been given to the parish of St. Mary Lambeth, in the fifteenth century, by a pedlar, who made the gift conditional upon his dog, the faithful companion of his journeys, being buried in the churchyard.

Another story states the condition to have been that a representation of the pedlar and his dog should be kept in one of the church windows. This legend appears to derive some force from the fact that a small window on the south side of the church has a painting of a pedlar with a long staff and a pack, and accompanied by a dog. A further story relates that the pedlar fell asleep near Farthing Ferry, and that while he slept his dog scratched up the turf and discovered buried treasure.

A further legend asserts that the pedlar took cover from a storm under the wall of the old

Lambeth Church, on the spot which afterwards sheltered Queen Mary, wife of James the Second, and her son in their flight in 1688. The story is to the effect that the priest, finding the pedlar under the wall, observed, "Thou art early for vespers, my son." "I am not for vespers, father," replied the pedlar sadly, "I am for that

THE PEDLAR AND HIS DOG, LAMBETH.

road on which rain threatens no longer, and the summer sun does not weary the traveller."

"Art thou an honest man?" enquired the priest. "Hast thou much custom? Dost thou mete out true measure?"

"Yes," answered the pedlar, "I mete good measure, to my detriment. It is tramp, tramp, tramp for but little gain."

After much persuasion the priest induced the

pedlar to join in the evening service, and then the story runs that years later, when the pedlar, then a prosperous Lambeth tradesman, was about to die, he left his acre to the church, praying that God might prosper the land as He had prospered himself.

From records of 1504, it appeared that the receipts from Pedlar's Acre amounted to only 2s. 8d. a year. Its value increased, and in 1752 the plot was let on lease at £100 per annum, and a fine of £800 on renewal at its expiration.

The land is first mentioned as 'Pedlar's Acre' in a lease of 1690. At an early period it was an osier-ground, called in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries "Church Osiers." The curious little picture-window of the Pedlar and his Dog, in Lambeth Church, was certainly there in 1608, according to a reference in the Vestry Book, in which the churchwardens' accounts disclose "two shillings paid to the glazier for a panel of glass for the window where the picture of the Pedlar stands." In 1703 it appears to have been injured in a storm, and was repaired; for a "new glass Pedlar" is mentioned.

Under an Act of 1826 the legal estate was vested in trustees, and remained in their hands until 1900, when, it was claimed, the Act of George the Fourth was repealed and the legal estate was vested in the Borough Council, which automatically took over the duties of trustees. The rector and churchwardens denied that the legal estate was vested in the Council. At this

time the land was rented at £1,800 per annum, and the proceeds were devoted towards a reduction of the rates. This, however, was equivalent to only a farthing in the £.

In 1910 the London County Council purchased Pedlar's Acre from the Lambeth Borough Council, for £81,000, paying that sum into the Court of Chancery, pending the action-at-law heard and decided in December 1911, in which the rector and churchwardens claimed proportions of the purchase-money, under the Local Act of George the Fourth, when the inhabitants of Lambeth secured the vesting of the property in them, conjoined with ten other rated inhabitants, as trustees. The Act had been sought and obtained following an attempt in 1824 to build a chapel with money raised by mortgage on the land.

In deciding against the rector and churchwardens, Mr. Justice Neville held that the legal estate was vested in the Borough Council, and that the fund was a charitable trust for civil purposes only. He directed that the income from the £81,000 be paid to the Council, to be applied by them to the relief of the general rate of the borough only and not to ecclesiastical purposes.

It seems that the County Council's pet antiquary, Sir Laurence Gomme, collating the vague legends about the entirely anonymous pedlar, had gone so far as to term him "Dog Smith." It would therefore seem, as no one else had ever given the pedlar a name, that

Gomme had oddly mixed him up with the famous seventeenth-century Alderman Smith, of the City of London and of Wandsworth, whose far-reaching charities are famous.

A curious proposal was made in 1884 by some ecclesiastical vandal who objected to the Pedlar (not being a Saint) figuring in a window to remove the window altogether from the church, but this raised such a storm of indignation locally that the idea was abandoned, not however without the ecclesiasticizing—so to say—of the Pedlar in a oblique way, by introducing a figure of him and his dog in an entirely new window. There he is to be seen as an 'extra' and eighth 'turn,' in company with "The Seven Corporal Works of Charity."

CHAPTER V

THE ADELPHI

To the left of that odious approach to Charing Cross District Railway Station, Villiers Street, Strand, extends a quiet and not undistinguished region called 'The Adelphi.' You, in the daily habit of hurrying perhaps to and from that station, do not suspect the existence of the dignified Adelphi. All you know is that Villiers Street is a narrow and an unpleasing thoroughfare, at any hour of day or night. In the morning, when the workaday world exits from the 'Underground' and proceeds up towards the Strand, Villiers Street is all yawns. It, not undeservedly, has the appearance of having experienced a 'night out.' There is an unlovely air of stale dissipation about it; of a tired but unrepentant cheap and tawdry wickedness. It has all the flashy meretriciousness exhibited by almost any and every street which conducts to a busy railway centre, added to a repulsiveness all its own.

Let us, therefore, turn aside, out of this ill-savoured purlieu of cheap profligacy, to the left, into Duke Street, whose continuation is John Street. Immediately a quiet almost profound

surrounds you, for this is a by-way: if you like, a 'nook,' for it is residential and the way to nowhere, except for its residents. 'Picturesqueness' can scarce be the word for the Adelphi, because it came into being between 1766 and 1780, when the neo-classic ideas of the brothers Adam were expressed in the building of it. A picturesque quality, indeed, this little region once had, but that was very long ago, when Durham House, originating in the fourteenth century and existing until the time of James the First, was the town-house of the Bishops Palatine of Durham. The site of it and its gardens extended over most of what is now the Adelphi, from the Strand to the river, but all now left is a memory, and the name of a grim little court, "Durham House Yard." The Strand, in those remote days, was a street of palaces whose magnificent fronts faced the street and whose gardens and water-gates gave upon the river, then flowing over land long since embanked. The seventeenth-century 'York Gate,' at the foot of Buckingham Street, inpinging upon, but not quite in, the Adelphi, is a survivor of those old conditions, and shows us to what limits the tides once flowed.

To London, in the early years of the eighteenth century's second half came four Scotsmen; brothers, who (as remarked elsewhere in these pages) saw opportunities in London which Londoners themselves did not perceive. They were the brothers John, Robert, James and William Adam, who saw there the ruins of

Durham House and shrewdly observed the march of London's expansion westward. It occurred to them that here, in this neglected spot, was a splendid site for a new quarter. Not a very large area, but one which, to a speculative builder —and those brothers partook of that nature— had immense attractions. Aubrey, well over a hundred years earlier, had noted the view from a turret of Durham House, where once the unfortunate Sir Walter Raleigh lived. It looked, he said, " over the Thames, and had the prospect which is as pleasant, perhaps, as any in the world, and which not only refreshes the eyesight, but cheers the spirit, and (to speake my mind) I believe enlarges an ingenious man's thoughts."

The Duke of St. Albans was, in the time of the brothers Adam, the freeholder. He was in the way of being financially embarrassed—in short " hard up," to adopt the Micawberish formula; and he readily granted to the speculative brothers a lease of ninety-nine years, from March 25th, 1768, at a ground-rent of £1,200.

Thus in possession of their land, the brothers were faced with a problem which already they had considered. It was that of raising the level of a site very steeply descending to the river, and of creating an artificial plateau from which their new quarter was to spring. The town looked upon the first stages of this project with amused and cynical interest. How was it to be realised ? Not at all, was the general opinion.

If we explore the Adelphi to-day, with the

intent to discover how it was done, the famous "dark arches" will show us. The level with the Strand to Adelphi Terrace (originally, by the way, styled 'Royal Terrace') was obtained by building arches; those labyrinthine vaults that are an open right of way extending from Lower

ADELPHI ARCHES

Robert Street beneath Adelphi Terrace, and resumed underneath the Hotel Cecil, as far as Savoy Buildings.

The raising of the level involved creating that steep rise from Villiers Street up John Street which it seems unlikely any modern municipal

authority would permit to be created solely for private benefit in any building scheme. There are, it should be added, other "dark arches" on the right-hand side of Villiers Street, leading directly into Craven Street, but they date only from about 1864, when the South Eastern Railway's Charing Cross terminus and hotel were built. Like the Adelphi arches they are a necessity of an awkward site.

The Adelphi dark arches have a darkling fascination all their own. A roadway, dimly lighted, descends into them, and heavy lorries occasionally enter and emerge, for in these recesses are wine vaults. At the end of them you come out to the river level, where once wharves existed, now marked by the back railings of the Embankment gardens. High overhead is Adelphi Terrace.

The brothers Adam were not to continue their work without criticism and ridicule, nor to complete it without difficulties. It was a time when Scotsmen were greatly disliked, and the brothers were accused by wags of bringing their workmen from Scotland and engaging pipers to play to them on the job: especially quick music, so that the bricklayers and others should put more energy into the work. "Bonnie Dundee" was found to be a splendid spur. This quaint witticism was developed, and the idea of Scots canniness matched against the same quality on the part of the workmen was said to have resulted in a strike, and the employment of Irish.

In 1773 the brothers Adam, with their scheme not yet completed, found themselves greatly in need of funds. These they obtained by means of a lottery, authorised by a private Act of Parliament, entitled "An Act for enabling John, Robert, James and William Adam to dispose of several houses and buildings in the parishes of St. Martin-in-the-Fields and St. Mary-le-Strand, in the county of Middlesex, and other their effects by way of chance, in such manner as may be most for the benefit of themselves and their creditors." The capital of this lottery was £218,500, in 4,370 tickets of £50 each. The highest prize was for the last ticket drawn, £25,000; the second, of £5,000, was for the first ticket.

The builders gave the name of 'Adelphi,' from the Greek word for 'brothers'; and conferred upon four of its streets their four Christian names.

From its completion, the Adelphi became, what it has since remained, a resort of literary and artistic people, drawn perhaps to it by those qualities observed by Aubrey, in the long ago, which "cheer the spirit and enlarge an ingenious man's thoughts." The Adam brothers may be said to have provided for this, for they built for the Society of Arts, in John Street, the house still occupied by it. Garrick had his town residence at No. 5 Adelphi Terrace, and there he died in 1779. Dr. Johnson, leaning with Boswell on the railings of the Terrace, lamented the going

of him and another: "Two such friends as cannot easily be supplied." The Savage Club has its quarters on the Terrace, and few houses in the Adelphi are, in fact, without their literary or artistic memories.

They are, it is true, more than a little time-worn and they do not readily, for the most part, lend themselves to the ideals of to-day; but they suit those residents who have chosen to live here, and the rumours which from time to time are given currency, that the Adelphi is to be sold for demolition and the building of a giant hotel, or like developments, distress those who are jealous for the preservation of one of the few retreats in central London from the noise and tumult of to-day.

CHAPTER VI

OLD LONDON SHOPS AND BUSINESSES

Recent years have dealt unkindly with many an old London shop. It is the penalty of business expansion, of the increased value of land, and of the expiry of leases that the old shops should go. A group of distinguished old shop-fronts vanished from Long Acre about 1910, and has been replaced by some particularly commonplace showy motor-car businesses. In 1920 the old business of Lambert, the silversmith, founded 1803, in Coventry Street by the Haymarket, with its small square panes of glass, was removed and the premises were taken down; and so the tale might readily be extended. But not always does the business end with the change of premises, and many an old firm carries on under a new roof, or at a new address.

What and where is the oldest business in London? I will declare, without fear of contradiction, that it is the bell-founding business of Messrs. Mears & Stainbank, who make church bells in the Whitechapel Road, hard by St. Mary's Church. The shop front dates from 1738, but that is no criterion of the age of the business, for

Old Shop, Artillery Lane

an inscription declares it to have been "Established 1570." It is extremely unlikely any firm can make a claim to greater antiquity than that. The original head of the firm, one Robert Mott, or his immediate successors, cast a bell for Staplehurst church in 1594 which was sent to be recast three hundred years later. This must be an experience unique in the history of any firm.

The foundry was visited on March 28th, 1919, by the King and Queen, on the occasion of the casting of the King's Peace Bell for the new ring of four, intended for Westminster Abbey. It is inscribed "The Lord of Hosts is with us." The other bells are named respectively, "Ruth," "Faith," and "Pax."

A very fine and stately eighteenth-century shop front, in the unpromising Artillery Lane, off Bishopsgate, is worth seeing, even though it is situated in midst of a Jewish slum. It is numbered 56, and is a grocer's shop: "Arthur Locke, late Cornelius Barham."

The oldest business actually in the City of London is that of Davison, Newman & Co., now in Creechurch Lane, Leadenhall Street, but until 1890 at 44 Fenchurch Street, where the business had been founded in 1650 by Daniel Rawlinson, grocer. It is a grocery business yet, and still retains the sign of the "Crown and Three Sugar Loaves."

Daniel Rawlinson was the first English grocer to sell a pound of tea. He did not generally sell it by the pound, because the price of that

weight of tea-leaf was then £10, and that sum of money at the time when he was doing business was relatively very much greater than it is now. He was a friend of Mr. Samuel Pepys, of the Admiralty Office, hard by; and Mr. Pepys, who was ever like the Greeks according to St. Paul, keen "to hear or tell of some new thing," after mentioning Mr. Rawlinson, notes in his Diary, September 28th, 1660, "I did send for a cup of tee (a China drink), of which I never had drank before." The Diary in after years notes also that on one occasion, on coming home, he found Mrs. Pepys "making tea."

Sign of The Crown and Three Sugar Loaves

The diarist notes, too, how the Plague fatally visited the abode and business premises of Daniel Rawlinson, and that in the following year the house was destroyed in the Great Fire. It was rebuilt, and the grocery business duly carried on. In 1679 Daniel was gathered to his fathers, and his son Thomas reigned in his stead, becoming

Sheriff in 1687, and Lord Mayor and "Sir Thomas" in 1706. By 1763 the style of the firm had been altered to "Rawlinson, Davison & Newman," and after 1777 the name of Rawlinson disappeared. Newman did exceedingly well for himself. He was described as one of the richest citizens of London, worth £600,000, and Davison had acquired a great fortune. They were partners in life, and in death they were not divided, for they were buried in one vault in the neighbouring church of St. Olave, Hart Street, and one tablet records their virtues.

Mr. Thwayter succeeded them. He had been originally a clerk in the business, and was taken as partner, in company with two others, on the very generous terms of paying £500 each. Thwayter became wealthy enough to be able to bequeath £500,000 to his widow, £40,000 to the Clothworkers Company, and other legacies.

There are steady old customers of the firm. The London Hospital has dealt with them since 1754.

Although changes in the City have necessitated removal to new premises, this extremely old business still keeps some old relics, including antique tea-canisters and venerable account-books, written in a careful copper-plate script. They are very curious account-books, for they include entries relating to the time when the firm owned sugar plantations and coffee estates in Jamaica, and were extensive slave-owners too. Particulars and reports on the value and health of indi-

viduals among their slaves afford quaint reading. It is historically interesting to know that among the 340 chests of tea, on which an import duty was demanded, shipped to Boston in 1773, and thrown overboard by the angry Colonists into Boston Harbour, thereby precipitating the revolt by which the New England colonies became the United States of America, some were the property of Rawlinson, Davison & Newman.

Chemists and druggists, by wholesale and by retail, are among the oldest-established businesses in London, but the oldest unhappily cannot be found in their original homes. Messrs. Horner & Co., of Mitre Square, Aldgate, claim to have been established in Bucklersbury before 1666. They removed in 1878 to their present address. Stow says of Bucklersbury that "the whole of it, on both sides throughout, is possessed of grocers and apothecaries." Messrs. William Sutton & Co., of Chiswell Street, formerly of 10 Bow Churchyard, Cheapside, were there, at the sign of the Golden Ball, in 1669, and in 1673 were selling the once and long-famous "Daffy's Elixir." The house was demolished in 1891, and the sign is now in the Guildhall Museum. Corbyn, Stacey & Co. were, it appears, in business before the Great Fire.

On the other hand, Messrs. Hooper & Co., chemists, have been always where they are yet, at No. 24 Russell Street, Covent Garden, since 1732, but the name was originally that of Jones.

Tea, as we have seen, brought great wealth to Rawlinson and his successors; nor was this the only firm that early dealt in what was called "the fragrant herb." Commercial persons, then as now, were eager to enter a business that promised such wealth. Among them was Thomas Twining, who, in search of fortune, came up to London from Worcestershire early in the eighteenth century and in 1710 took Tom's Coffee House, converting it into a place where tea might be served in cups or purchased for home consumption. It was sixty years after Rawlinson had begun to deal in it. In the City that "excellent, and by all Physicians approved, China drink called by the Chineans 'Tscha,' by other nations 'Tay,' alias 'Tee'" had found great success. In 1661 they sold it at the "Sultane's Head Coffee House, near the Royal Exchange." So Thomas Twining was not early in the field. But he was by no means too late. The coffee-house that had been "Tom's" he called the "Golden Lyon," and in the next year he did a great stroke of business: nothing less than securing appointment as "purveyor of teas" to Queen Anne: that "Great Anna" of Pope's verse:

> "Here, thou, great Anna, whom three realms obey,
> Dost sometimes counsel take, and sometimes tea."

Pope intended the pronounciation 'tay' in that rhyme. It was an age when even the sea was called "the say."

Thus began the existing business that still conducts its affairs in the Strand and Devereux Court, and even yet Twinings hold a Royal appointment. Early had there sprung up connoisseurs in teas. They had grown, with increased importation and consumption, somewhat less ruinously expensive than at first, but were not cheap. Your cheapest tea in 1714 was Bohea, and that cost from 9s. to 25s. a pound ; probably the cheaper kinds of that Bohea were more or less what tea merchants style " fannings." Congou was 24s. ; Pekoe 24s. ; Imperial 24s., and Congou Bohea 20s. Green tea was much more reasonably priced, 16s. to 20s, and Bloom Green was 18s.

There are relics at Twinings', among them such cups as those from which Dr. Johnson, that " hardened and shameless tea-drinker," as he described himself, might have drunk, for they are the cups of his period ; more like liquor glasses than cups. Many of those would not make more than the customary two breakfast-cups of the Englishman of to-day. So, when Dr. Johnson confessed that he had " for twenty years diluted his meals with only the infusion of this fascinating plant," and that he was one " whose kettle has scarcely time to cool," he would not be, to our ideas, exceeding. And when he proceeds to say that " with tea he amuses the evening, with tea solaces the midnight, and with tea welcomes the morning," he admits no more than we might ourselves. So Johnson, the

excessive tea-drinker, is in some respects, judged by modern standards, a myth.

Thomas Twining the First was succeeded by his son Daniel, and he by Richard I, who was a wise and far-seeing man. In 1783-4, William Pitt, Chancellor of the Exchequer, at a loss to raise sufficient revenue, largely owing to the high duties which caused immense smuggling of tea, consulted the head of Twinings', and he advised the admission of tea duty-free, on consideration of the tea merchants paying the Revenue a lump sum, for four years. This plan was accepted, under the Commutation Act. Within the four years, the trade, thus stimulated, increased from 4,750,000 to 15,850,000, and the revenue was a considerable gainer. So, too, was the public, for the retail average price of tea fell almost 3s. a pound. The importers found their account in the increased turn-over.

Herein is a lesson for the Chancellor of the Exchequer, and the Postmaster-General of our own times, as well as for those permanent officials in Whitehall who really govern England and pull the strings that make the puppets of the Punch-and-Judy Show at Westminster perform their tricks.

Richard Twining II added banking to the tea, coffee and cocoa business, just as Barclays Bank was once an offshoot of Barclay & Perkins' brewery. Customers would then visit Twinings' and change cheques for so much gold, and so many pounds or half-pounds of tea, coffee and

cocoa, and would be served by those tail-coated, clean-shaven and white-cravated assistants who only were allowed. The banking business was taken over by Lloyds, in 1830.

Where is that Londoner who does not recollect the evidence of his nose that used to inform him he was passing Burgess's, No. 107 Strand? It was a kind of *olla podrida*, or, as you may say, a Piccalilli smell; a compound of everything aromatic in the way of pickles, anchovies, truffles, sauces of all kinds, and curry, that issued from that little shop and smote you, not unkindly, as you went between Savoy Street and The Adelphi.

John Burgess, calling himself an "oilman," began business in 1760; not, however, at this address, but at No. 101. He was the son of a grocer at Odiham in Hampshire, and was one of those who, coming to London, see better opportunities there than Londoners themselves perceive. In 1779, he is found advertising in the *Morning Post and Daily Advertiser* that he is removing to No. 107 Strand; and incidentally making the announcement that "His new Salad Oil is just landed, which of sweetness nothing can excel." There were other commodities mentioned, but that will suffice.

John Burgess advertised in the first number of the *Times*, March 18th, 1788: "Smoaked Salmon and Dutch Herrings, Fine French Olives," and a variety of other articles, including Westphalia Hams; by which it would seem that

the interpretation of the term "Oilman" was then a very generous one.

Although one looks, for the most part, in vain for the old signs, many ancient businesses are yet in existence. On Ludgate Hill is the optician business of Dollond, established by John Dollond, the son of a Huguenot Spitalfields weaver in 1758. The modern shop is very different from the original sign of "Sir Isaac Newton and Two Pairs of Golden Spectacles." Dollond's has ever been scientific and, in the true and larger sense, an optician's—not a mere 'shoptician's,' so to say, whose business is only 'shoptics'—the art of selling.

I remember a bun shop in Lombard Street where they sold the most astonishingly good buns. Their "ha'p'ny busters" were ambrosial; their penny variety a revelation. The proprietor resembled an elderly Cupid, and wore, besides an old-fashioned suit of clothes, the most benevolent of aspects. He would sell you a bun with a courtesy, and watch you consuming it with an evident satisfaction that made you forget he was one of a long line who had occupied those premises, that he was member of an ancient Corporation, and probably could have purchased a good slice of Lombard Street, had he a mind to it. I believe it really did him good to see people enjoying his buns. But his shop has given place to a *Bureau de Change*: we shall nevermore buy buns in Lombard Street, which is now entirely given over to Banks and the like financial corpora-

tions. I regret the passing of Deputy Webber, for that was his name, and of his business, and I can in imagination see him now, dressed in black, not unlike the typical butler, beaming upon his customers.

Then there was Alfred Pill, who, on the south side of Cheapside, between St. Mary-le-Bow and Old Change, sold the most exquisite and alluring jellies. You might have had a bun with Deputy Webber, consumed a jelly (Ah!) at Mr. Pill's, and then, passing, let us say, through St. Paul's Churchyard, have found on Ludgate Hill another bun shop where buns not inferior to those of Lombard Street might be had. "Deputy Brown of Ludgate Hill," as he was known (what a lilt there is in that phrase, like the title of a comic song!) carried on business at the north corner of Ave Maria Lane, where is now a cheap tailor's. It was in Mr. Deputy Brown's shop that first I learned how to all Americans all small cakes are "buns," just as all insects are "bugs." I believe I was at the moment consuming the last bun (for sometimes they "went" quite early), when there entered an American who said he would "haave" a bun.

"All sold, sir."

The American pointed an accusing finger at a heaped-up dish of pastries, and said, simply: "Buns!"

Before I leave—or shall I say 'quit'—this little trip from buns, by way of jellies, to more buns, let me give a reminiscent word to a quaint little

open-air business then carried on against the wall of St. Mary-le-Bow, in Bow Churchyard. For many years there stood the little stall of a man who made and sold the most delightfully finished miniature copper kitchen utensils : one might have of him a whole *batterie de cuisine*. He was an institution, so to say, but I was not past that spot for some years, and, when I went that way again, he was gone. I have spoken of him to many people, but no one seems to remember him. Yet in many a home his exquisite little copper kettles and pans must yet be cherished, for sake of their beautiful workmanship.

An interesting old business-house at the north-west corner of St. Paul's Churchyard disappeared many years ago. It was originally the house of John Newbery. He sold pills and patent medicines, as well as publishing books, and he was not superior to pushing the remedies he sold through the agency of the books themselves. Thus we read, in the "History of Goody Two Shoes," published by him, that her father died miserably, being seized with a violent fever in a place where Dr. James's powder was not to be had" ; the fever-powders of Dr. Robert James being chief among those remedies that John Newbery vended.

This eminent publisher and medicine-pusher set up business here in 1745, at the sign of the "Bible and Sun." He died in 1767 and lies buried in the churchyard of his native place, St. Lawrence Waltham, Berkshire. His publishing business became in course of time the

firm of Griffith & Farran; extinct about 1900.

Amid all the City changes the quaint old shop of Birch, Birch & Co., 15 Cornhill, still looks

Birch's, 15 Cornhill

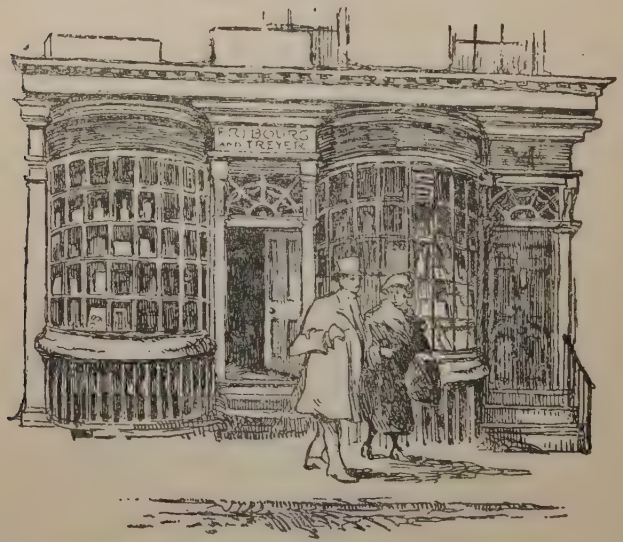
upon the modern world in a kind of dim puzzlement, as though sorely missing the early generations of customers, who wore wigs and knee-breeches, or, a little later, stocks and other wonderful gear. It dates from the time of George the First, and is a charming old frontage, absolutely unaltered. About 1906, the many coats of

paint obscuring its delicate work were scraped and burnt off. They were about two hundred in number. In comparison with its gigantic neighbour, an assurance office, it is a very tiny dot of a place. You could put 'Birch's' away into a corner of the 'Mutual,' and nobody would be very greatly inconvenienced; but there are yet many who would be highly incommoded if Birch's ceased to purvey their famous turtle-soup and other delicacies. The business was originated by one Samuel Horton, who took as partner a Samuel Birch. A later Samuel Birch, who, it is claimed, was the first purveyor of turtle-soup in London, was an Alderman of the City of London and Lord Mayor in 1815. An orator and a patriot, Colonel of the City Militia, he was good-humoured enough not to resent the nicknames given him, "Marshal Tureen" and "Mr. Pattyman." He was, moreover, a man of letters; he produced plays that held the stage and books that were readable. One of his plays, "The Adopted Child," was popular long after he had killed his last turtle.

The business was acquired about 1830 by Messrs. Ring & Brymer.

Up West, there still looks upon Haymarket, at its upper end, the little double-fronted bow-windowed shop of Messrs. Fribourg & Treyer, tobacconists, at No. 54, who have been in business there since those days when George the Third was a young man and when the 'Mohocks,' the fashionable young hooligans of that age,

terrorised the town. And further west, on the east side of St. James's Street, stands yet—and seems likely yet to stand, for they are the owners of the freehold, and can do what they will with their own—the very old-world shop of Messrs.



FRIBOURG & TREYER, TOBACCONISTS, IN HAYMARKET

Lock, who have made and sold hats there for a hundred and eighty years. They make, among other kinds, the round hard felt hats which we call "bowlers" and the Americans style "Derbys." But Messrs. Lock invoice them as "Cokes." According to the received story, the name comes from a customer of old who intro-

duced the style: one of the Cokes of Holkham. But they call themselves, not "Coke," as the name is spelled, but "Cook." Some have sought to find a connection of this with "Billycock," and think "billycock" hats are identical with "bowlers," but that is not so, for long before "bowlers" came into existence the rakish and roystering young men of town, such as the "Mohocks" already mentioned, were accustomed to set their hats at what we may now style the Admiral Beatty angle. It was then called the "bully-cock," a term first known to be used in 1721. Peaceable citizens meeting a swaggering fellow with a bully-cocked hat adopted the wiser course and crossed to the other side of the street.

CHAPTER VII

SOME STRANGE MUSEUMS

Not the British Museum, nor any of those in that habitat of Science and Art, South Kensington; not even that of the Geological Society in Jermyn Street. None of those the public know, more or less. These are the museums the public do not know at all.

THE BLACK MUSEUM

There is excellent reason why the public do not know the gruesome collection of criminal relics housed in a very spacious room in the head-quarters of the Metropolitan Police, New Scotland Yard. It is because the public are not admitted to it. Time was when it could be found not so difficult to gain entrance, but to-day you must show cause, so to speak, and fill up a form with some searching questions. The police officials are grown extremely secretive to-day, as anyone will easily discover, on visiting "The Yard." It is the great 'Hush' administrative department. Perhaps there is more reason than you would suspect in all this: there may be some skeletons in cupboards there.

However that may be, to obtain entrance to what the police style, officially, the "Criminal Museum" is beyond the competence of most people to-day. You have to pose as a "Criminalogist." That may not be altogether difficult, seeing that the late G. R. Sims styled himself one, although in fact he had only a vulgar and morbid love of the gruesome. At any rate, he posed effectively enough for Scotland Yard to admit him to its Chamber of Horrors: and if he, with only the qualification I have noted, why not you?

I like the police, with the reservation that they are apt to get a little above themselves and to consider they are the masters of the public, rather than their servants. That always has been the criticism of "the Force": that and its military organisation. And London magistrates who sometimes dodder, rather, are too inclined to side with the police, against the weight of evidence. This sometimes rises to the heights of a scandal, as we now and again acutely perceive.

But, on the whole, the police are human. Sometimes they strike. And even the Chief Commissioner, as we have seen, can be of an innocent and confiding nature. Sometimes, too, a Chief Commissioner can feel that he is, after all, only a policeman, which, as a military officer, he is only too apt to forget. The late Sir Edward Bradford, indeed, was inclined to go too far in that direction, and was fond, during his Com-

missionership and his residence at Kensington, of personally directing constables on duty there, thus taking on the duties of an inspector.

I find conversations with the police both amusing and instructive, as, for example, when taking prolonged shelter from a rain-storm at the rear of the Banqueting House in Whitehall, I held converse with a constable who, like the sentry in *Iolanthe* accustomed to "think of things that would astonish you," thought strange fancies.

He was of the historical mind, and spoke of the history of Whitehall. He said, "I suppose you don't know that George the Third was executed in front of this building."

I replied I had never heard of it, and he reproved me for my ignorance. I enjoy being reproved by the police on those terms. Of course you will suspect I have invented this incident, but that is not so. I would not be so foolish as to invent a legend so incredible. But I did not correct my constable. That would be too dangerous. He might have trumped up, in his annoyance, some charge against me. For I never have forgotten a conversation with a policeman, in which, talking of assaults, technical and actual, on the police, I said: "Now, if I were merely to touch you, like that, with my forefinger, and you were in an ill-humour, you could, I suppose, charge me with an assault."

He said, "It's what we like to make it."

Blue Goggles

Folding Ladder

False Arm.

And therein lies a great truth and a grave danger.

Well, now, as to the "Black Museum." It is maintained and added to as a museum of instruction for young constables in the ways and methods of the criminal classes. Most of the exhibits are in glass cases. Here, for example, is a collection of implements used by counterfeit coiners, with specimens of their half-crowns, shillings and sixpences, together with a set of gold coins, including a Jubilee sovereign, counterfeit indeed, but with sixteen shillings' worth of gold in it, giving a good profit on the production, and rendering detection extremely difficult.

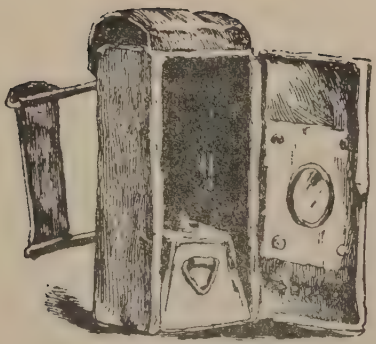
Pistols, swords, knives and daggers are in abundance. Most of them have a story. Here is the pistol from which Edward Oxford in 1840 fired three shots at Queen Victoria when she was driving along Constitution Hill, and close by is that pointed at her on a later date by one Arthur O'Connor. O'Donnell's revolver, with which on the high seas he shot Carey the informer, and for the crime was hanged at the Old Bailey, is an exhibit.

A rather daunting decorative frieze of casts from the heads of convicted and executed murderers, looking down upon their bloodstained choppers, bludgeons and other implements of assassination, gives the average visitor the doleful feeling that they will haunt his dreams. There, for example, is the countenance of that supposedly "good young man," James Orrocks, who shot

Police-Constable Cole. The policeman's truncheon case is an exhibit, with a bullet-hole in it and there is the bullet found in his head. Who—that was for a time the problem—shot P.C. Cole? Orrocks was suspected, but he was deacon of the chapel at Dalston where the murder was done, in 1882. Deacons don't do such things, it was thought. But this one had. He had a taste for carpentry, and another for revolver-practice. The bullets that killed the constable exactly fitted his pistol, which perhaps was not much to the point. Many pistols and bullets would so exactly correspond. But he had left behind, in his burglarious operations, a chisel which convicted him. He had been accustomed to take it to be ground to an old dame, who said his chisel had the word 'Rocks' scratched on it with a pin. The chisel found had no such marks on it visible to the eye, but it was photographed, and the print, still shown, displays the word standing out, like the deadly accusation it was, dazzling white. It duly convicted and hanged him.

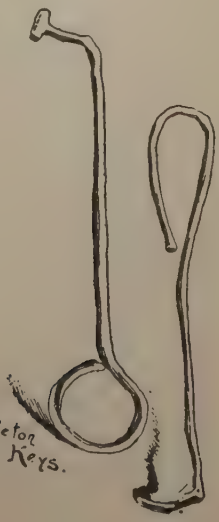
There is a mystery among these displays. It is that of the cast of a murderer's face from which long thin whiskers have grown, similar to those affected by the criminal himself. They grew thus after the cast was made and placed in the collection. None can explain the thing, and it is looked upon with whatever awe the police have in their composition.

Charles Peace is a figure of criminal romance.



Lantern made from a Bryant & May's March Box

Small Vice



Skeleton Keys.

A burglar, and murderer of a policeman at Banner Cross, near Sheffield; yet his memory is looked upon with a kind of grudging admiration. He is "Charley Peace," rather affectionately. He was a criminal genius, with an extraordinary aptitude for effective disguise, and a quaint humour all his own, exhibited, for instance, when he gave a Camberwell tradesman friend some cigars the friend appreciated.

"I stole them," said Peace, "and, as you like them so much, I'll steal you some more." And he did; but that beneficiary merely thought this was his obliging friend's pleasant wit.

Peace, great as he was in his criminal way, deserves, and has, a case to himself. There his extraordinary ingenuity is fully seen. His folding ladder, opening out to 8 feet, and folding to 15 inches, so that it could conveniently be carried under the arm, is a work of extreme mechanical cleverness, as also is his tiny oil-lantern, made from a Bryant & May matchbox. Here, again, is the false arm, with a hook at the end of it, a contrivance he wore to disguise his real arm being busy elsewhere. His jemmies, skeleton-keys, and the crucible used for melting down stolen jewellery are seen, and that little vice used in conjunction with a fine pair of steel nippers for turning keys on the wrong side of doors. Finally, the blue goggles he was accustomed to wear in his favourite character of eccentric old philosopher. His grotesque countenance—for he was an ugly man, although his friends found him

extremely likeable—looks down upon the room and his relics with all that philosophic satisfaction he assumed in life.

For myself, I do not like horrors. The assassins and their *pieces de conviction* revolt me; and the knowledge that the company of the damned, arranged overhead, is being continually added to is saddening; not so saddening, however, as the parallel thought that it ought to be more numerous than it is, but is not so because of the all-too-many untraced shedders of blood. Who killed Harriet Buswell, at No. 12 Great Coram Street? "The police have a clue": we know that phrase. But often it leads nowhere. A Dr. Hassal was arrested on suspicion of that crime, and discharged, largely because his teeth did not fit the teeth-marks on a bitten apple found in the woman's room. The apple was a "clue." Here it is, and a cast of the marks. The person whose teeth should fit them was, and is, "wanted"; but the murder took place so long ago as Christmas Eve, 1872, and so the "clue" has long ceased to have any value.

Socialist, Communist and Fenian banners hang from the ceilings; specimens of the ropes that have hanged murderers festoon a corner; "infernal machines" bring back memories of the dynamitards. One of these, of a devilish ingenuity, thought to be exceptional before the Great War of 1914-18 proved the contrary, is what looks like a lump of coal, but is an imitation, of cast-iron, originally intended to contain

a charge of dynamite, and prepared by some Satanic creatures with the idea of placing it in the bunkers of a great Atlantic liner. A further specimen of savage ingenuity is a baby's explosive feeding-bottle. Perhaps with a touch of humour about it is an india-rubber cudgel labelled "Used for beating the police." Card-sharpers' appliances, walking-sticks that are loaded with lead, or are swords, are numerous, and there is a stick, a horn-handled malacca cane whose ferrule unscrews, revealing a small pair of pliers. This was the property of a thief who used to travel to and from the Continent and plunder fellow-passengers with whom he shared a cabin. He would secure an upper berth, and, while the occupant of the lower slept, would noiselessly operate with this invention, hooking up any likely-looking bags and silently rifling and returning them.

THE MENDICITY SOCIETY'S MUSEUM.

Founded in 1818, the Mendicity Society numbers among its distinguished originators none other than the great Duke of Wellington, the victor of Napoleon at Waterloo. For years after that victory had brought peace, the "Iron Duke," not so insensible as that popular name would imply, was pestered, as were other officers, by beggars who, as a rule, falsely claimed to be Peninsular or other war veterans. To end that, the Mendicity Society was founded, not so much to deny charity as to secure that impostors should no longer prey on the charitable.

To-day the Society carries on in Red Lion Square, in an unobtrusive way, in upstairs rooms that are unlike the usual comfortable quarters of such institutions, where, as a rule, the Secretary, a personage of much importance, is surrounded by stately furniture and Turkey carpets of the best. There is nothing of that sort about the Mendicity Society's rooms, which are the most cheerless of any apartments. For over a century has this industrious society, exposer of impostors of every alms-seeking type, been at work. It has secured 100,000 convictions; has impounded begging-letters uncountable, and has in its time assembled a huge collection of trophies. They were interesting, but it seems that they grew so numerous and so collective of grime, that the bulk of them has been dispersed. But some are left.

The begging-letter writers are the most persistent amongst impostors; and, if the Society may be said to specialise at all, it is in unmasking these plausible frauds. Two hundred thousand of such letters, and more, have been handled. Many of these have been destroyed, partly for sheer reason of need for space, but in part because the practice has been to destroy them either when the writer dies or exceeds fourscore years of age. Once a begging-letter writer always one is the experience of the Society.

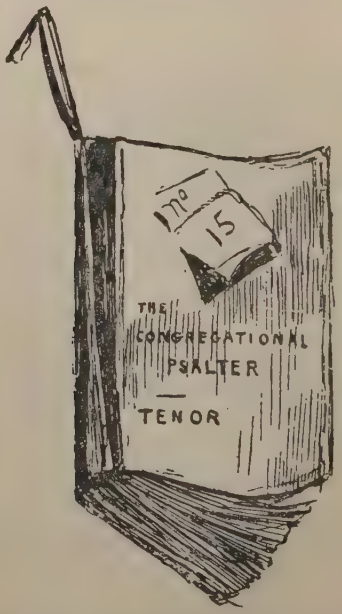
But the trophies have always been those taken from the spectacular kind of mendicant; the kind claiming to have lost limbs in some dramatic

form of accident, such as the gay picture of the explosion on the " Nimrod." This excruciating picture, a study in arms, legs, cog-wheels and fire, probably the work of some artist in a common lodging-house, belongs to the realistic school of art. But the leg alleged to have been lost in this

affair was still on the ' unfortunate ' man's body, although concealed by being doubled up.

The Society has been at work so long that it has seen all sorts of impostures rise and decay. The broken accordion business, for example, is a thing of the past, but once it was a thriving and sure fraud. The Italian padrones in those times were accustomed to send out Italian boys, with

instruments possessing only two or three sound notes, for the purpose of exciting the sympathy of soft-hearted people and securing their money. There was once, too, an impostor who claimed charity because his tongue had to be removed



in an operation for cancer. The alleged tongue he carried in a bottle. When he was arrested and the tongue was found to be that of a sheep, he 'found tongue,' so to say, in language that made those who heard him wish he really had lost it.

Another begging impostor was accustomed to

carry what, by the evidence of its cover, purported to be a Congregational Psalter, but was, within, a Court Guide with names of persons good for donations, or not so, neatly ticked off.

Does begging imposture pay? Not when the Mendicity Society's officers get busy. But otherwise, yes. A man for many years earned a comfortable living for himself and family by displaying a graphic banner showing the working of a coal-mine in which falsely he alleged he had been injured.

Post-war England seems to imply, in its social conditions, that work for the Society is by no means scarce. Everyday observation suggests that we have become a nation of dole-snatchers, beggars and unemployables. Indeed, the conditions obtaining when the Society was founded have returned, and for the same reason, but intensified because of an increased population. For like recurring reasons, it is to be hoped, these conditions will improve.

THE MUSEUM OF THE ROYAL COLLEGE OF SURGEONS

There is on the south side of Lincoln's Inn Fields a gloomy, or, as some would say, a stately porticoed building evidently, to any passer-by, a public institution of some kind. It is the home of the Royal College of Surgeons, and it contains a museum. I think you will not like that museum, but at the same time a horrid fascination may draw you to see it; as not again

it will me. It is quite easy to gain admission, perhaps for two chief reasons: it is not generally known, and, being known, few would care to visit it. You will guess, readily enough, what may be seen there. Thousands of skulls in neat rows; more thousands of specimens of morbid growths on the human body, preserved in glass vessels, in spirits, and really scarifying models of all sorts of horrid things. There are some choice specimens of bottled stomachs, highly interesting; their arrangements singularly like those of a motor carburetter; and, more horrifying, strange to say, than any of the actual specimens, the life-sized cartoons, duly coloured, of the human frame under various operations. They make one more nearly scream than anything else.

Here, too, is the statue of that eminent founder of modern surgery, John Hunter, who died October 16th, 1793. The skeleton of the Irish giant, O'Brien, which he anatomised, is hard by. O'Brien went in dread lest the anatomists should get his body after his decease, and he made arrangements that his executors should sink him out at sea. But Hunter, in spite of that, secured him, and here he is, contrary to all right and decent feeling. However, what could be expected of reverence from one of those whose profession it is to pry into the mysteries of our mechanism, so that they may claim to know a little!

Hunter profited a good deal as an army surgeon in our wars, as modern surgeons have done to-

day. There is an added painfulness now in this collection; in the war exhibits. For that reason I will declare that this museum is easily the saddest place, to a truly feeling heart, in London, for here are the shot-torn fragments of some who landed in France to the careless air of "It's a long, long way to Tipperary," and have come back only as educational specimens in surgery.

CHAPTER VIII

THE INNS OF COURT AND CHANCERY

THERE are four "Inns of Court," and there were numerous "Inns of Chancery." The first-named are Lincoln's Inn, Middle, and Inner Temple, and Gray's Inn. Among the Inns of Chancery were Barnard's, Staple, Clifford's, Thavies, Clement's, Lyon's, Furnival's, Strand, and New.

The four Inns of Court stood towards the profession of the law in the status of a University. To each of them were attached two or three of the smaller Inns, which were what the Colleges of Oxford and Cambridge are to those Universities. The small Inns were, in fact, hostels, and students of law graduated from them to the greater; or, as we would now say, were "called." To be called to the Bar is, in fact, to be first fledged as a barrister.

In our civilisation, as distinct from that of the Roman, which perished with the downfall of the Roman Empire, whose disappearance began what are styled the "Dark Ages," when all learning ceased, the only lawyers originally were the clergy. They alone could read and write, or had any scholarship. Others signed their names,

so to say, or rather "made their mark," with a cross: itself a symbol of profound significance.

And so, exclusively, the great officers of State were Archbishops and others of the religious hierarchy, and what was styled 'justice' was dispensed by them, and causes argued in their Courts, until the reign of Henry the Third, when it began to appear no longer seemly for those of religious profession to wrangle in secular matters. Thus, in that reign, law officers who were not necessarily in holy orders were appointed. This became possible, in the advance, slow though it might be, of learning. Our legal system, founded largely as it is on Roman law, is built up partly from the recovery of classic precedents, and in part from feudal practice.

Lawyers ever have been disliked and suspected. It is chiefly an ignorant prejudice, founded on a fear animating the uneducated of things they do not understand. There is, even yet, a dread, largely prevalent, of the "junior branch" of the law, the solicitors, who seem to many people a kind of persons who are armed with occult powers they certainly do not possess, and with a superior order of cunning brains that I, for one, have never yet discovered them to be endowed with.

If, then, the common people so greatly fear the junior branch, how much more should they go in dread of the senior, the real lawyers, the judges and barristers!

This dislike felt by those who may themselves not generally be more than indifferent honest

is founded unconsciously upon the fact that a lawyer's duty is not by any means to see that right shall prevail. His duty is to his client; to whoever shall employ him, and his aim, according to circumstances, is to make the worse case appear the better, or the better the worse. His conduct in this respect is, indeed, laid down for him rigidly, in almost as many words. Only the judges are superior to these considerations.

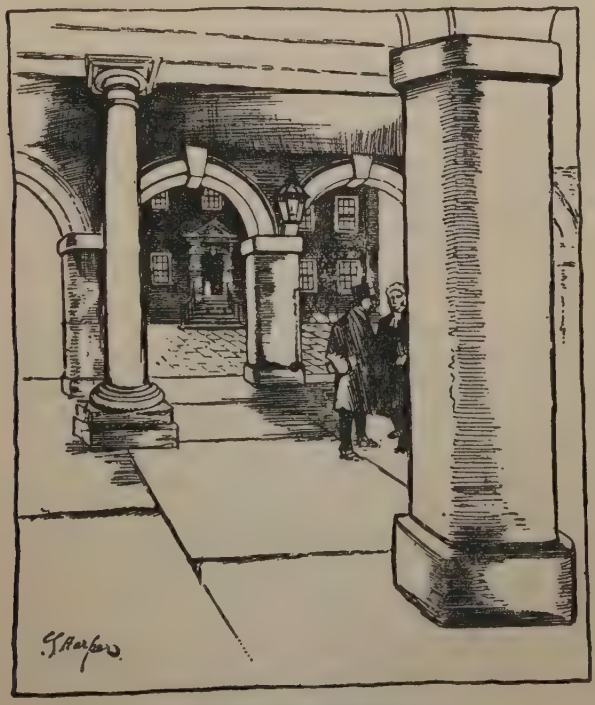
For some such reasons, perhaps, that the Ordinance of 1234 was given out, by which the Lord Mayor of London was not to permit the setting up of any schools of law within the City. The ancient prejudice may be found in another form to-day, in the feeling that may or may not take definite shape, that lawyers, as a class, should not sit in Parliament. More than any other class, they are there for their own personal advancement, rather than as representatives of their constituencies, and thus they do not fulfil the theory of Parliamentary representation.

THE TEMPLE

The story of the Temple may or may not disclose the success of legal quirking and quibbling, by which unfair advantages are to be snatched by those learned in the ways of jurisprudence; but the cynical will smile at a history which discloses the lawyers in the beginning as tenants and in the end as owners.

The history of the Temple begins with the removal of the Knights Templar from their

original home by Chancery Lane to what they then styled the "New Temple," about 1180. Here they built the Temple Church, completed in



VIEW FROM THE CLOISTERS

1185, and here they remained until their Order was dissolved, in 1312, when the rival Order of the Knights Hospitallers of St. John of Jerusalem was granted their property, themselves to be dissolved in 1608.

The Knights Templar took their origin from 1118 in the passionate vows of a few enthusiasts to protect pilgrims on the road to the Holy Sepulchre at Jerusalem, and to safeguard them from robbers. They vowed themselves to plain living and poverty, but their Order soon acquired property and became extremely wealthy. It was their wealth, as well as the decay of the old Crusading spirit, which ceased to send pilgrims and military expeditions to the Holy Land, rather than the vile practices alleged against them that brought about the suppression of the Knights Templar.

They had warred valorously in their day; they had in thousands laid down their lives in Palestine, but now the reason for the Order had gone, and those who sought their wealth found not too scrupulous means of confiscating it.

Their successors, the Hospitallers, quite early let part of their land in the Temple to law students. The Temple was, and is, outside the City. It is a private property, like all the Inns of Court, in the area of one of the City of London 'Liberties': districts which, although outside the City's olden walls and bounds, are yet attached to it. Ludgate, for example, was the City boundary, but the Liberty extends to Temple Bar.

The governing bodies of the law students, thus early settled in the Temple, as lessees, by steps now not very clear to us, established themselves permanently. By 1572 they had built

the grand Middle Temple Hall, one of the greatest glories of the Temple to this day. Finally, in 1608, the Treasurers and Benchers of the two separate, and still separate and independent, Societies of the Middle and Inner Temple acquired the freehold, at the dissolution of the Hospitallers, by a 'grant' from James the First, induced, as it would appear, by a gift to His Majesty of a "stately cup of pure gold, filled with gold pieces." The 'grant' was subject to the payment annually by each of the two Societies of £10. But this did not satisfy them. They must have fee-simple; and so in 1673 they purchased the land outright, on the terms of that £20. It would seem to have been a good bargain for the lawyers. The Benchers take great care of the essential documents connected with this grant. They are in a doubly locked chest under the altar of the Temple Church.

But the unexplained associations of the Hospitallers and the Benchers between 1350 and 1608 require a great deal of that elucidation we are never likely to obtain. That association must have grown greater than merely one of landlord and tenants, as may well be surmised from the customs prevailing yet, or not long discontinued, which derived from the Hospitallers. The waiters in mess are "panyers"; the now extinct 'Order of the Coif,' the abolished 'Serjeants-at-Law,' were in their origin the *fratres servientes* of the Templars.

And the lawyers, as well as acquiring the

property, have adopted the badges of the Templars: the Middle Temple using their Holy Lamb, and the Inner Temple the Horse. It is a Winged Horse now, a Pegasus, but before 1563, the time when the lawyers adopted and adapted it, the Horse always had been ridden by two men, and had no wings. These two men are supposed to either have indicated the professed poverty of the Templars, suggesting that they could not afford a horse each; or, possibly, to portray their help of weary travellers. But wits had other interpretations, when the lawyers came to use these symbols as :

" As by the Temple's hold you go,
The Horse and Lamb display'd
In emblematic figures show
The merits of their trade.

The clients may infer from thence
How just is their profession ;
The Lamb sets forth their innocence ;
The Horse their expedition.

Oh ! happy Britons, happy isle !
Let foreign nations say,
Where you get justice without guile,
And law without delay."

But a sardonic commentator on this wrote :

" Deluded men, these holds forgo,
Nor trust such cunning elves ;
These artful emblems tend to show
The *clients*, not *themselves*.

'Tis all a trick ; these all are shams
By which they mean to cheat you ;
But have a care, for *you're* the *lambs*,
And they the wolves that eat you.

Nor let the thought of ' no delay '
To these their courts misguide you ;
'Tis *you're* the showy horse, and they
The jockeys that will ride you."

THE TEMPLE HORN BLOWER

There is, among the other Temple customs, one which, Spenser tells us, derives from those remote times when the Knights Templar dined together, " till they decay'd through pryde."

It is that of horn-blowing at half-past five, half an hour before dinner in Middle Temple Hall, in term. The custom has been explained by the necessity of blowing a loud blast in olden days, to recall those students who might be out hunting. The frock-coated, top-hatted and gold-laced porter blows the horn in the different courts, and the students hear and cease from hunting the hare at Charing Cross or Black-friars, or putting up a covey of partridges along the Embankment, or relinquish their other more up-to-date occupations.

And being, as a rule, well-behaved students, observant of the rules and regulations, they do not wear the Spanish cloaks that are forbidden, nor play shove-groat. Above all, they do not ill-treat the butlers, a thing expressly dis-countenanced. They may not go into Hall with any weapon, except daggers, and few even carry those.

LINCOLN'S INN

From the narrow, crowded thoroughfare of Chancery Lane—a lane indeed—are entered the quiet precincts of Lincoln's Inn, beneath the archway of a venerable brick gate-house, built 1518-21. Ben Jonson, according to Fuller, in his "Worthies," worked as a bricklayer on this gate-house, long before his poetic genius developed, with Horace in one hand and a trowel in the other. The story is as picturesque

as the place. The actual bricks of this building were made and baked in what was then a "coney-garth," or rabbit-warren, on the site of what is now 'New Square.' They are of a hardness not now to be matched, and rich in that quality rightly to be called 'texture.'

The "Society of Lincoln's Inn," in 1922, celebrated the five hundredth anniversary of its installation on this site. The lawyers brought to the place the name their corporation long had owned. They came from a "Lincoln's Inn," by Holborn and Fetter Lane, and acquired their new property from the Bishops of Chichester, who had a Palace here. Holding, as those ecclesiastics did, the office of Lord Chancellor, the street we now call Chancery Lane, running past their residence, was called originally "Chancellor's Lane." In the relations once existing between Church and Law, the Lord Chancellor's Court, or Court of Chancery, was in the Bishop's jurisdiction, and, long after Law, Equity and the Church had parted company, that Court continued to be held in the Old Hall of this Inn. That Hall, the oldest building of Lincoln's Inn, faces you as you enter Old Square, by the gate-house. Alterations made from time to time, and particularly the coating of the exterior with plaster, in 1900, have altogether disguised its antiquity. Used as the Court of Chancery until 1851, it is that scene described by Dickens in the case of Jarndyce *v.* Jarndyce, in which he gibbeted the scandals of the law's

delays, especially and notoriously exhibited in the scandal of the interminable proceedings in Chancery. There was, in fact, a case on which Dickens built his satire, the great "Jennens Case," originating long before the novelist was born, and still in progress years after his death. Well might Dickens write, in *Bleak House:* "This is the Court of Chancery, which has its decaying houses in every shire, which has its worn-out lunatic in every madhouse, and its dead in every churchyard . . . suffer any wrong that can be done you, rather than come here!"

Old Square truly is old, some of its houses date back to 1524. Look upon those dingy and yet picturesque walls and curious towers, many of whose chimneys, honestly not pretending to be other than chimneys, are built out from the ground, as such. We would not do the like of that to-day, as may be seen, indeed, in those modern buildings, dating from 1880, on the other side of the gate-house, chambers replacing old ones exactly like these yet remaining.

Here, to the right of the Old Hall, is the Chapel, built 1623, from designs by that eminent architect, Inigo Jones, called, in the records relating to the building of it, 'Indicho' Jones. He wrought in the Palladian, or classic style, but here he is seen successfully apeing the Gothic; with a curious crypt-like undercroft, vaulted in Gothic ribs, like edifices of two hundred years earlier. This covered way was expressly

designed for the use of barristers seeking clients. In *Hudibras* we read how they would :

> " Wait for customers between
> The pillar rows in Lincoln's Inn."

A curfew-bell is rung nightly by the porter at the old Chapel.

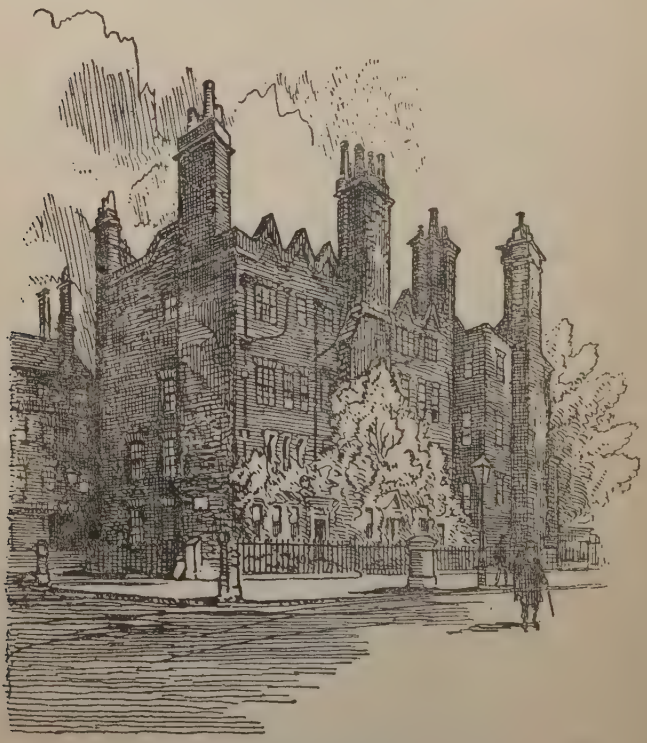
A German bomb, on October 13th, 1915, dropped close by and damaged the stained glass windows of this Chapel.

Passing beneath the archway of the Old Hall, and round by other old buildings, into New Square, " new " in 1692, you are in a delightful enclosure. Originally named Serle Court, there was no central garden until 1845. Vines and fig trees cling about some of the walls of the old houses.

And so you may choose between passing out through the fine archway from New Square into Carey Street, or past the New Hall and Library, built by Hardwick in 1845, into Lincoln's Inn Fields. If through the archway into Carey Street, pause and look up at the grotesque Renaissance keystone-mask over the outer arch. It seems to typify a kind of tutelary demon of the Law. It is strange that poor Miss Flite—or Dickens for her—did not lay some stress on this.

Lincoln's Inn Fields lie just without Hardwick's imposing Hall, Library and Archway. The lawyers did not like the building around those fields in the seventeenth century, and protested against it, in vain. That region could

no longer remain as the country. The great garden was railed in much later, in 1735, and the "country" became a dangerous purlieu, neither



Ancient House in New Square

rural nor yet quite urban, into which at night you ventured at your peril. Gay, the poet, lately enjoying a greater fame than ever before,

in the revival of his *Beggar's Opera*, described the kind of place he found Lincoln's Inn Fields to be :

" Cross not with venturous step ; there oft is found
The lurking thief, who, while the daylight shone,
Made the walls echo with his begging tone ;
That crutch, which late compassion moved, shall wound
Thy bleeding head, and fell thee to the ground.
Though thou art tempted by the linkman's call,
Yet trust him not along the lonely wall ;
In the mid-way he'll quench the flaming brand,
And share the booty with the pilfering band.
Still keep the public streets where oily rays,
Shot from the crystal lamp, o'erspread the ways."

To this day the passages, rather than streets, of Great and Little Turnstile, remind the curious enquirer that once they were country lanes leading into those fields, with such rustic turnstiles as may yet be found in rural districts ; and ' Gate Street ' tells much the same story.

THE INNS OF CHANCERY

The Inns of Chancery have long ceased to exist. So long ago as 1600 they had become obsolete, and law students studied only at the Inns of Court. Finally, in 1900, the Court of Chancery itself heard the affairs of Clifford's Inn, to determine who were legally the beneficiaries, and ordered them (the affairs, not the beneficiaries) to be wound up. The Society realised its property, and Clifford's Inn was sold

to Mr. Willett, the builder and contractor, and the instigator of 'Summer Time,' for £100,000. Much of the site has been covered with gigantic commercial buildings. The Society of Clifford's Inn, like some of the others, notably the Brotherhood of Serjeants' Inn, had (like a Christmas Club) a "share-out," as the Ancients of Barnard's Inn had when they sold their property, including the tiny old Hall in a by-way off Holborn, to the Mercers' Company, in 1894.

It was good to be an Ancient of Barnard's Inn, better to be Principal, and not quite so good to be a Companion. In the very nature of things there was but one Principal, but the Ancients were five and the Companions nine. The nine dined with the five and the one, but the Ancients took some fees as well; it never appeared for what services.

At this time of writing there remain some of the old parts of Clifford's Inn, very old-world, with rough, uneven pavements, and that row of ancient and dingy red brick buildings looking upon the garden, whose plane trees Samuel Butler, the now famous author of *Erewhon*, *Alps and Sanctuaries*, and many other works, would have liked to abolish. For close upon thirty years he lived, a bachelor, on an upper floor of No. 15, and he died there.

I vividly remember him and his curious ways; his habit of printing on the title-pages of his books, 'Op.' 1 and so on; his farmer-like appearance, and his ruddy skin, with what

medical men would style " extravasated veins " on his face, giving him a weather-beaten appearance.

Posthumous fame has made a great and keenly interesting figure of one whose contemporaries thought, according to their angle of vision, a harmless or an irritating crank, very disturbing indeed to settled and sanctified ideas.

GRAY'S INN

" Gray's Inn for walks " ran an old saying, comparing the features of the old Inns of Court, and few Londoners would care to dispute either the extent or the attractions of the gravel spaces here: some might, with advantage, be planted with trees and gardens. The extensive area of this Inn, once accounted the foremost of them all, is that tract comprised between Holborn, Gray's Inn Road, Theobald's Road, Verulam and Raymond Buildings and Warwick Court. It anciently formed a part of the Manor of Portpool, one of those prebendal manors belonging to St. Paul's Cathedral, whose names are inscribed on the stalls in the choir.

From the thirteenth to the sixteenth centuries the Lords Grey de Wilton held property in the Manor of Portpool of the Dean and Chapter; and, in the thirteenth century, Reginald de Gray, Justiciar of Chester, seem to have established a hostel for law-students. This grew to separate and corporate existence in the next century, as the " Honourable Society of Gray's Inn."

Here again the lawyers, not permitted in the City, had established themselves in the Liberties of it ; for this was the region of Holborn Bars, without the City wall, but handy to the centre of affairs. Gray's Inn Road, as we style it, formerly ' Gray's Inn Lane,' and earlier ' Portpool Lane,' here joined Holborn, at a spot where goods coming into the City paid toll. It was a ' port ' or entrance, and hard by was a pond, hence the name of ' Portpool.'

The Society of Gray's Inn does not seem to have been by any means so apt at creating themselves freeholders as were the Societies of the Inner and Middle Temple. In 1516 it was granted a lease from the then owners, the Priory of Shene, that lease being renewed by Henry the Eighth. A large sum was paid for the absolute freehold in 1651, when the Commonwealth ruled the land, but the lawyers lost on that transaction. The Commonwealth gave place to a restored monarchy, and, when Charles the Second returned, the purchase was declared invalid. The property was sold to one, Sir Philip Matthews, and it remained in that family until 1733. The rent was not excessive ; it had been, in 1516, £6 13s. 4d., and so it continued until the Society, for the second and final time, purchased the fee-simple.

Gray's Inn Square is the central feature of the Inn, and there, in that wide, gravelled space, you realise more fully than elsewhere the dignity and calm quiet of the Society's home. Space,

FIELD COURT, GRAY'S INN

indeed, is the especial feature of Gray's Inn, above any of the others, and its quiet is more profound, alike intrinsically and by contrast with the surrounding streets, which are vulgar and plagued on two sides with tramways. Thus the hush of these silent squares and courts is infinitely more grateful to the jaded pedestrian than that of the Temple or Lincoln's Inn.

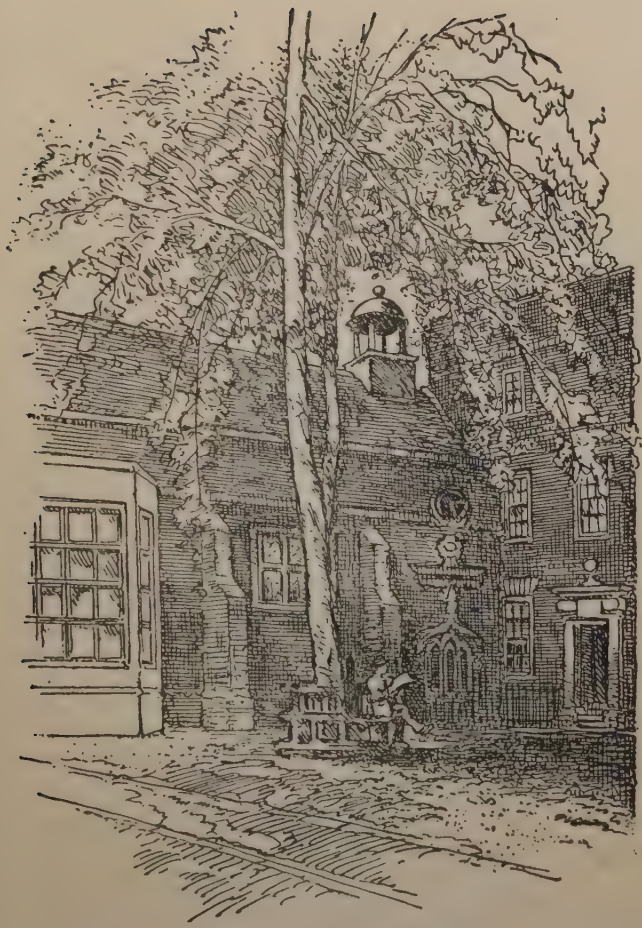
It is an effect of elbow-room and to spare. Yet there were times in the history of Gray's Inn when its popularity among the legal profession made it a congested area, particularly in the time of Henry the Eighth. The Ancients, those in the most preferential situations, had to sleep two in a bed, and we find Sir Thomas Neville writing to the Society to say that he will accept Mr. Attorney-General, Sir Christopher Hales, as his bedfellow.

The great lawyer and philosopher, Francis Bacon, Lord Verulam, Viscount St. Albans, like his father, a member of the Society and its treasurer, has now his commemorative statue there in bronze, set up to celebrate the three hundredth anniversary of election to be treasurer in 1608. It stands in South Square. The Chapel and Hall intervene between that Square and the much more extensive and baldly gravelled space of Gray's Inn Square, whence, however, you get the best view of Hall and Chapel. Field Court, with its great gateway to the gardens, its pillars crested with the griffin that is the Inn's badge, and the space between filled with those

ornate wrought-iron gates, dated 1723, is pleasant: not entirely for its own sake, although its old houses are pleasant enough, but for that view of the gardens between the closed gates. It is, I suppose, because those gates *are* closed that the gardens look the more desirable. The gardens of Lincoln's Inn, formerly fast closed and now always freely open, seemed then far more delectable, because you could not enter, than they are since all may walk in them. "God Almighty first planted a garden," wrote Bacon. "And indeed," he continued, "it is the purest of pleasures."

STAPLE INN

As you pass along Holborn, making for the City, having crossed the top of Chancery Lane, the ancient, many-gabled front of Staple Inn presents a venerable face to the still rather raw redness of the huge Prudential Assurance buildings on the other side, almost opposite. It is not inappropriate that they should look thus upon one another, for, in point of fact, Staple Inn is owned by the Prudential Company, which, after the extinction of the Inn, in 1884, with an admirable mixture of public spirit and long-sighted business acumen, purchased the property for £68,000. It was done at a time when Staple Inn was thought to be in danger of falling into the hands of those who would demolish this one of the most charming nooks of old London and build gigantic structures on the site of it.



STAPLE INN COURTYARD

Everyone was talking, writing and publishing much in the way of protest, and no one was doing anything practical, when the Prudential, calmly and without fuss, purchased the property. The Company could well afford it. It must be a pleasing thought, to those whose lapsed insurance premiums have contributed to the commercial success of that enterprise, that, at any rate, they have been contributories towards preserving this oasis beside the turmoil of Holborn.

It is well described by Dickens, in *Edwin Drood*, as " one of those nooks, the turning into which out of the clashing street imparts to the relieved pedestrian the sensation of having cotton in his ears and velvet soles on his boots. It is one of those nooks where a few smoky sparrows twitter in smoky trees, as though they called to one another, ' Let us play at country,' and where a few feet of garden-mould, and a few yards of gravel enable them to do that refreshing violence to their tiny understandings."

But why ' Staple Inn ' ? The name comes from a Company of Staplers, or warehousemen, who here, at one of the western bounds of London, set up what we would now term a ' bonded warehouse,' chiefly for wool, in 1313. It was thus, in a sense, a Custom House, and so remained until the staple of wool was, in 1463, removed into the City. The lawyers then acquired the site, and, as the ' Society of Staple,' built here that frontage, and in the courtyard their Hall which is now the Hall of the Institute

of Actuaries. Other buildings in these paved courts are those eighteenth-century chambers that over their doorways display keystones with the date and various initials. Chambers in No. 10 were occupied by Mr. Grewgious, who, in *Edwin Drood*, is represented as speculating as to what those initials over his doorway might portend. "Possibly John Thomas," or "Perhaps James Tyler"; or, under convivial circumstances, "Pretty Jolly Too." But he never penetrated a mystery which, had he but the mind to it, might easily have been resolved. In that case, he would have gone to the Library of Gray's Inn, where it would have been discovered that 'P' stands for 'Preces,' or President, of the Society of Ancients of Staple Inn, and that in 1747 (J)ames (T)aylor held that office. It amuses me rather, having many years ago investigated this trivial matter, before everything even remotely concerning Dickens appeared to be worth while, as is now the case, to see, very frequently, that someone has "solved the problem."

As Tennyson remarked of his poetry, now "all can grow the flower, for all have got the seed."

Where, in the accompanying illustration, you see a figure seated under the tree, an unsuspected forgotten well suddenly revealed itself one day in the summer of 1922, to the startled gaze of a girl who had been resting on that seat. The cobble-stones and paving in general subsided in front of her.

CHAPTER IX

THE PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE

On the east side of Chancery Lane there cannot fail to be noticed a great stone range of buildings of semi-ecclesiastical design, with an entrance-archway leading to Fetter Lane, where another front of this great block is seen. It is the Public Record Office, the building in which are kept the archives of the nation.

The building, or series of wings of a building, is not yet complete, as the unoccupied plot of land on the Fetter Lane front indicates. It will be built upon in course of time, when the continually accumulating records can no longer be accommodated in the space now available. The original block was completed in 1858, and the latest in 1900.

The architectural appearance of the Record Office is not altogether inspiring. It is a cold, unsympathetic Gothic of fifteenth-century style, by Pennethorne, unsuccessful in reproducing the feeling of that age; but it does not, perhaps, altogether deserve the criticism passed upon it in 1855, when the exterior was practically completed. "Our architectural vocabulary," re-

marked a weekly review, "does not contain terms to describe its monstrosities. The general effect combines the workhouse, the jail and the Manchester mill."

Within the Record Office are preserved historical documents dating back to a time as remote as the eighth century, for one of its treasures is an Anglo-Saxon charter of King Edward, 764 A.D. The greatest care was, therefore, taken to ensure that these priceless relics should be safely stored for all time, and thus woodwork does not enter into the fittings. The many hundreds of thousands of parchments, charters and State papers are stored in what is, in effect, a series of 130 strong-rooms. They rest in iron racks with slate shelves. It was scarcely the object to provide a handsome or attractive interior, and it certainly is not that. There is a free daily public access in the Literary Search Room and the Legal and Departmental rooms.

Until the Record Office was built, these historic State archives were scattered about in as many as sixty different places. At one time there was a State Paper Office at Westminster, established in the reign of Queen Elizabeth, 1578, "to prevent the embezzlement" of papers which occasionally took place in the frequent changes of Secretaries of State; but although it was from time to time regulated, between 1613 and 1848, no attempt was made to collect the vast and ancient accumulations in the Tower of London, the Chapter House of Westminster

Abbey and the cloisters, or those others in the Rolls Office, or the King's Mews at Charing Cross, to name but a few of these repositories.

The first attempts at assembling these enormously large deposits are found in the various Commissions issued between 1800 and 1837, "to methodize, regulate and digest" the documents in the Select Committees which resulted in the Public Records Act of 1838. By this Act all the "rolls, records, writs, books, proceedings, decrees, bills, warrants, accounts, papers and documents whatsoever of a public nature, belonging to Her Majesty," were to be housed together in a place of safety.

The next step was to find, or to provide, that place: the Treasury, that excellent watch-dog over public expenditure, not easily persuaded of a new building being necessary. It suggested that the upper floor of the then newly built Victoria Tower of the House of Lords would be exactly the suitable place, and it was only after a prolonged contention that land adjoining the Rolls Chapel in Chancery Lane was agreed upon and an entirely new building authorised.

The Rolls Chapel had originally nothing whatever to do with those parchment rolls of ancient legal documents which gave a name to it. The Chapel was at first dedicated to a singular use. It was founded by Henry the Third, in 1232, on this site, just outside London, as part of the House of Converts for the reception of

"Jews and infidels" who had adopted the Christian faith. This does not seem to have been a highly successful institution. The Jews and infidels do not appear numerously to have been induced to see the light. As for the Jews, the next King, Edward the First, hanged 280 for chipping the coin of the realm, and expelled the rest, and there could have been scarcely sufficient infidels in England at that time to occupy the Christian clergy of the House of Converts. Fifty years later, however, the House was still in being. Ancient foundations remain, long after their use has lapsed, and the House of Converts, with a few casual Jewish pensioners to excuse its technical survival, was given over to the Clerk of Chancery, whose chief care was of something quite different, the records of the early Court of that name. Thus, side by side with the religious nature of the Chapel, it became one among the earliest storehouses of those documents. The first keeper or Master of the Rolls, or *Custos Rotulorum*, in 1377, was one William Burstal.

The Master of the Rolls to-day is the custodian-in-chief of these treasures, but in not much more than name. The Deputy-Keeper is the actual working and responsible official, and the Master of the Rolls sits on the Bench now as one of the Judges of the Court of Appeal. Historically, one of the twelve Masters in Chancery, entrusted with the records of the Chancery, he is now not so important among judges as his title (which

has nothing to do with his legal functions in the Courts) would seem to imply.

But what of the 'rolls'? There are plenty of those to be seen by the inquisitive. They are skins of parchment, stitched together and bound up at one end. There may be, according to size, 500 to 1,000 skins in a roll, and the weight ranges from one to two hundredweight. For convenience of investigation, there are wooden stands in the various search rooms, on which the unrolled roll is hung, not unlike a roll of wall-paper, but much narrower.

One of the reasons of the formerly much scattered condition of the records is that originally Parliament was not a Council of the nation definitely installed in one place. It once followed the king in his travels up and down the land; and, even when at home, Parliament was not seated in its own house, but in the King's Palace at Westminster. Thus the rolls and other documents were to be found everywhere. A relic of these ancient conditions is still to be discovered in the official title of what the public call "the Houses of Parliament." Technically, they are the 'New Palace of Westminster,' in succession to the old Palace, burnt down in 1834. In the Palace of Westminster were once the King's residence, Parliament and the Courts of Justice: indeed, all the administration of the realm.

There are many kinds of rolls of Chancery. The 'Patent Rolls,' whose name is perhaps most

often heard, have nothing to do, though it might be supposed, with the granting of patents or inventions, but are so called because each document in those rolls is, so to speak, an 'open letter,' addressed "To all to whom these presents shall come." Each of these "presents" was, in fact, delivered in open form, and their contents were 'patent' to all. The "Close Rolls" are the very opposite of the "Patent Rolls," for they were sent out and delivered closed and sealed. There are Charter Rolls and Norman, Gascon and others in the Chancery division. In the Exchequer rooms are the Pipe Rolls, containing the accounts of revenues collected from shires and counties, from 1154 to 1837. No one certainly has ever determined why these should be 'Pipe' rolls, and others not, where every roll is more or less in the nature of a pipe.

The museum of the Record Office is of more immediate interest to the visitor who is not a student working at deciphering ancient parchments. It is a room taking the place of the demolished Rolls Chapel, which had gradually ceased to be used for religious purposes. It is not as handsome a room as it might be, and should be, but the exhibits in its cases are of supreme interest. Here, in two volumes, is the famed Domesday Book. From 1696 until 1859 this historic work was housed at Westminster Abbey, in the Chapter House. Before that time, it was in the Tally Court of the Palace of Westminster, where it seems to have been since

having been brought up from Winchester in the reign of Henry the Second.

"Domesday Book" is the name given to two volumes of manuscript returns, showing who owned the land in this country towards the close

DOMESDAY BOOK

of William the Conqueror's reign. It is the Book of the Exchequer, giving all particulars necessary for ascertaining who owned the land and what taxes had been and ought to be paid. The fact is quite clear that the King in the winter of 1085-6, at Gloucester, commanded the returns to be made. They were made with the utmost

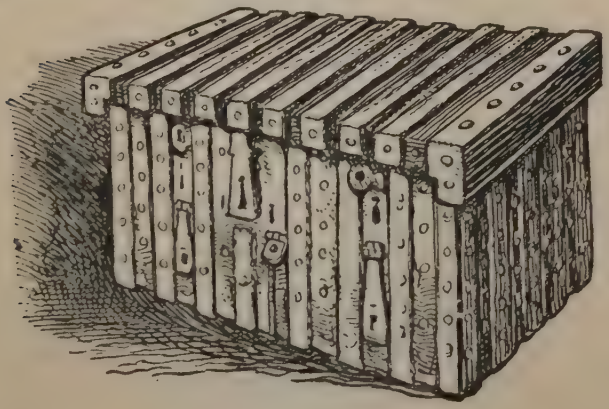
expedition, and were the work of Commissions issued for various counties and districts. Evidence was taken locally and set down and inscribed in these volumes, from which there was no appeal. So impressed was the popular imagination that the volumes ever have been known as "Domesday Book,"

There the first volume of 382 pages of parchment lies open in a glass case. The writing is as black and as red to-day as when first written. You may, after a little getting used to it and its Latin, full of contractions, read it quite easily, but it is quite another matter to attempt to comprehend all its terms. The learned, for example, are so unreliable that the measure of land, a "hide," cannot certainly even now be determined by them. Estimates range between 480 and 1,920 acres!

The writing is in two columns, and the districts are taken by those ancient and now, for most purposes obsolete, divisions — the "Hundreds." There were sixteen enquiries to be made by the Commissioners, including, firstly, the name of the place, and proceeding to ask who held it in the time of Edward the Confessor, who at the time of this enquiry, and how many hides were in the manor? How many homagers, how many villeins, cottars, free tenants and tenants in socage? How much wood, pasture and meadow? How many mills and fish-ponds? What had been added to or taken away? How much was the gross value in the

time of Edward the Confessor, and the present value? And—significant enough—" if more may be had?"

The second volume of Domesday Book contains Essex, Norfolk and Suffolk. It is supposed actually to be the first, for it is on a much more detailed scale, and includes a census of live-



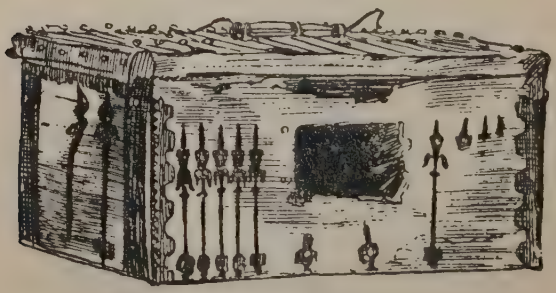
THE DOMESDAY BOOK CHEST

stock. This seems to have been found, quite early, impracticable.

There are many curiosities and queer things about this work. To begin with, it is by no means complete, Northumberland, Durham, Westmorland and Cumberland are not in it, but that is for obvious reasons. In all the Conqueror's twenty years of rule he had not succeeded there, although his ruthless men had laid a part waste. But there is no mention of

London, and none of Winchester, then the capital of England, or of Bristol, among other omissions. No one will ever solve this mystery.

The iron chest in which Domesday Book formerly was kept is close at hand. It has three locks. Many years ago the two volumes were taken to pieces, for convenience of being photographed. The original covers were then discarded, although not destroyed, and the books



ANCIENT BOX OF ROBERT BRUCE DOCUMENTS

were neatly bound in Russia leather in 1869, with metal knobs and a style of leather tooling that makes the historic record look 'respectable.' It might be a Family Bible. You could have nothing more domestically respectable than that, could you? And that was how things were done in 1869.

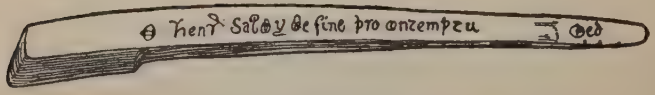
Among the treasures of the Record Office is the ancient wooden box once containing documents relating to Robert Bruce. By the look of it, someone would seem to have supposed it to

contain things more valuable, for the lock has been cut away. Here, too, are the Treaty signed on the Field of the Cloth of Gold between Francis of France and Henry the Eighth; and the Papal Bull constituting Henry "Defender of the Faith." Both have gold seals, designed by Benvenuto Cellini, the foremost craftsman of his age; but the seals shown are only electrotype copies. No words of criticism can be too severe in condemning this vulgar practice of hiding away originals, and fobbing off the public with vile copies.

The Defender of the Faith document (which as a 'Bull' should historically and philologically be sealed with lead instead of gold) is perhaps the most quaint and curious item in the Record Office, for the English Sovereign derives from it the title he still bears, although it be a very different faith from the original.

There are still preserved at the Record Office some specimens of the modern "tallies" with which the accounts of the nation used to be kept, although the many hundreds of thousands of them that once were in existence have been destroyed. These "tallies" were pieces of wood cut from willow or hazel sticks, and notched on one side with different lengths of notches, intended to represent varying amounts. When slit longitudinally and inscribed with the particulars of the name of the person paying or to be paid, these two portions formed exact counterparts of each other: in a word, they "tallied,"

and the person who had paid and received his half of the stick, or "tally," held an undisputable receipt. By an Act of 1783, this antiquated method of account-keeping was abolished, but for some purposes it was, all the same, continued long after. It was in the destruction ordered of the immense collection of these tallies that the Houses of Parliament accidentally were burnt down, by the overheating of the flue of the stove used in destroying them.



ONE OF THE EXCHEQUER TALLIES

CHAPTER X

WHERE THE BOOKS COME FROM

PATERNOSTER ROW AND THE PUBLISHERS

"LEAVES have their time to fall," wrote the poet and, so surely as October comes round and bare the branches, as certainly do other leaves multiply in the mart of literature, "the Row." There are two "Rows" in London, each equally well known to frequenters as "the" Row, and either practically unknown to the other; for Paternoster Row has no sort of commerce with that resort of equestrian fashion, "Rotten Row," in Hyde Park; and the West End has perhaps no idea that "the" Row means to publishers and booksellers a long and narrow lane leading from Cheapside to a dead-end at Amen Corner.

When autumnal mists and chills make miserable and lonely the tan-covered ride of "Rotten Row," Paternoster Row begins to sit up and take much more notice than usual, for the great autumn publishing season is at hand, the publishers' and booksellers' busiest time of the year.

At this time the printing-presses have done more than a moiety of their work and the binders

are now delivering their tightly corded " boards " of cloth-bound new books: aspirants for public favour and the critics' commendation. From grimy morn till sooty eve is " the Row " busied with this output, timed to intrigue the generous British public with thoughts of Christmas presents; and here you, who explore this region, may gather some idea of the magnitude of the book trade.

I believe I know most of what is to be known of publishing and of bookselling, and of paper and print as well, for I have lived amidst those activities all my life. Passionately once I wished to write a book and to publish it. *A* book, just one ! I thought of it perhaps for ten years.

First in Paternoster Row and then on Ludgate Hill, as I walked daily between those places for Hyde Park, morning and evening. And, now that I have written and published very many more books than I could carry, sometimes I just as passionately wish never to write another. But I am bound to say that frame of mind does not ever last long.

Well then, I have my own memories of Paternoster Row and of its trade terms of " Thirteen as twelve," and " seven as six-and-a-half," and of the lazy, sweet and mellow chimes of St. Paul's bells at four o'clock in the afternoon, which used for me to mean less the hour for evensong (as I now understand they indicate) than that it was going on for tea-time. And, as you readily will comprehend, when now I

Ivy Lane

chance to pass this way and hear them again, they sound, in the perspective of time, yet more mellow and soothing.

Books of every description are published in and about "the Row," beneath the mighty shadow of St. Paul's. Divinity, of every shade of thought, is largely represented here, even yet; although this quarter, once the exclusive and only publishing centre in London (with the exception of John Murray's publishing-house in Albemarle Street, Piccadilly, which has always been situated there), has greatly changed of late years. The publishers are now to be found in the region of Covent Garden and other parts of central London.

Divinity, of course, was the earliest stand-by of "the Row." It is inherent in the very name of the street, and of the surrounding purlieus: Ave Maria Lane, Amen Corner, Canon Alley, Chapter House Yard and Creed Lane; although, indeed, this last-named is an outlier, on the other side of Ludgate Hill.

The neighbourhood of the Cathedral determined the character of the early book-publishing here, and very much of that character survives. Here were the Paternoster sellers and the vendors of Bibles, prayer-books, or psalters, *cum privilegio*, alike before and after the Great Fire.

Paternoster Row is not what it was. Very few things are, and many among the most important books are sent forth from publishing houses elsewhere. But Longmans and Blackwoods, those venerable houses, and some impor-

tant other firms yet cling to this traditional region. Longmans, the oldest publishing firm, dates from 1724, when Thomas Longman, 1699-1755, who had been apprenticed to John Osborn, stationer and bookseller, of Lombard Street, purchased the business of William Taylor, who had issued, among other works, De Foe's *Robinson Crusoe*. In 1824 the style of the firm was the somewhat formidable one of " Longman, Hurst, Rees, Orme, Brown & Green."

Paternoster Row houses the business of Bagster's Bible Warehouse, of the Oxford University Press, and other disseminators of the greatest Book of all, and of orthodoxy in general. It is true that the Religious Tract Society has migrated to a street off Fleet Street, and that a wholesale stationery business occupies its former premises, but a savour of the sanctimonious (in the old sense of that word) still clings to this network of courts and alleys, and it is not only in book-publishing that it does so. Here is the chosen centre for purchasing those tracts with scare titles: " Where will you spend Eternity?" " The Sinner's Way," and so forth, with which, no doubt, you have been favoured in train or omnibus by well-meaning persons, who diagnose your spiritual condition to be desperate. And, if you want illuminated wall-texts of a religious character, this is your readiest market.

The oldest building in Paternoster Row is one rebuilt not long after the Great Fire, and occupied until recent years by the publishing

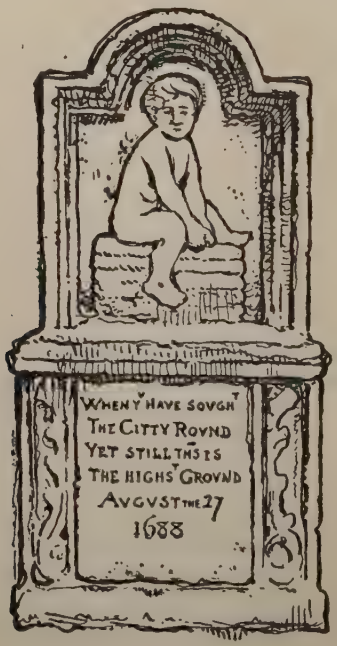
house of W. & R. Chambers, now gone to Soho Square. It has a very charming seventeenth-century red-brick elevation, with stone reveals to the windows and some placid-looking and altogether endearing sculptured keystone-masks. A great and always encroaching firm of wholesale drapers have acquired the premises, as they have a number of others in " the Row," and there seems indeed to be not far distant a day when " the rag trade " (as I understand those engaged in it to term their occupation) will outnumber others here.

There is, however, one feature of this area whose disappearance is by no means to be regretted. It was the number of greasy, cheap eating-houses which until some twenty-five years ago survived in Warwick Lane and Ivy Lane. Odious greasy scents and steam came from them and their cellar-gratings, as you walked along those narrow thoroughfares. Increased rentals have long since crushed out those places.

To find great drapery firms flourishing where books were sold is not pleasing to the sentimentalist, but it is not the new feature that might be supposed, for we may read in the diary of Samuel Pepys how, on May 1st, 1662, he came here with some ladies to buy a satin petticoat; and again, on January 8th, 1666, he bought, in Paternoster Row, velvet and camelot for a cloak.

" The Row " may in a curious parallel be likened to the Suez Canal, for its roadway is too narrow to permit of more than one vehicle passing

at a time; so here and there are little cut-outs or lie-bys, made at the expense of the foot-pavements, where a cart may draw in, to permit the passage of another; just as similar widenings



THE BOY IN PANYER ALLEY

on the Canal allow the passage of ships. There are characteristic sounds of "the Row." They are those of the scraping of cart-wheels against kerbstones and the tuneless whistling of errand-boys; there is something here—whatever it may

chance to be—provocative, it would seem, of unmusical and brainless whistling.

Panyer Alley, that leads from Paternoster Row to Newgate Street, is dear to those who have long known this part by reason of the Boy of Panyer Alley, a stone bas-relief let into the wall and dated 1688. This is, if we may believe the inscription below the figure, the highest ground within the City. We may not, say the surveyors, believe that, for a slightly higher level is reached in Cornhill. The boy sits astride a baker's basket or panier, or a corn-measure; but he has been so defaced with numberless coats of paint that it is no easy matter to define the object.

Panyer Alley is in the forgotten parish of St. Michael-le-Querne, otherwise 'St. Michael-ad-Bladum,' or 'in the corn-market,' the Latin 'bladum' meaning an ear of wheat.

In all these ways are books and yet more books. Come with me and peer into one of the great distributing houses—such as Simpkin, Marshall & Co.'s, for choice—and here shall you see rows and heaps and great stacks of books; while in front of a lengthy counter is a struggling crowd of "collectors," armed, like lawyers' clerks, with something like brief-bags, and all reading out the titles of books they have been sent by their employers, the booksellers, to purchase. In the busiest season—from now until Christmastide—these collectors have anything but an enviable life. They set out early in the morning from the booksellers' shops all over London and

tramp with the bags and "collecting-books," from one publishing house to another all day long; returning in good time for the country post, weary and heavy laden with literature light or "solid," but both equally weighty in the matter of avoirdupois. Day by day they repeat these rounds, calling over their wants at one house after another; but "magazine day" is their most strenuous time. At the end of every month appear the magazines. They are generally published about the 25th, and then is the collectors' field-day. You may see them staggering homewards in the afternoon with their bags filled to overflowing, and, in the agencies that supply the country bookseller, the parcels being made up for Suttons, and the railways give the enquiring stranger something of an idea as to how great the consumption of reading matter (call it not all literature) which goes to stay but not satisfy the appetite of that insatiate glutton, the Reading Public.

Old signs are rare in the Row; and the old publishers who conducted their business at the sign of the Black Eagle, the Three Tuns, or the Seven Stars have left no sign, save, indeed, the well-known device of Messrs. Rivington, the Crown and Bible, which was brought here from Waterloo Place by Messrs. Longman when they bought out the firm of Rivingtons in 1890. The only other relic of these old trade devices, the Feathers, a sign to be seen high up in the wall of a house in Canon Alley, is built in there from the wreck

of some old seventeenth-century house whose record has not come down to us, and is an excellently well-rendered representation of the "Prince of Wales's Feathers."

But Stationers' Hall still remains, and behind it

THE FEATHERS SIGN, CANON ALLEY

a little court-yard, two sides occupied with Stationers' almshouses and the remaining two formed by the back of the Hall and the north side of St. Martin's Church. The almshouses no longer know their bedesmen, for they are nowadays rented to publishers who keep their quire-

stock here; and 'tis well, for it is a sunless corner, relieved only by the giant plane-tree that has successfully struggled up to the light. Where that tree now grows the common hangman was used, in days when books came under a rigorous censorship, to burn condemned volumes whose contents offended Church dignitaries or Court officials. Many a priceless work has withered there in flame. A parcel of books belonging to the Grey family, one or two of them the especially treasured property of "Jane the Queen," Lady Jane Grey, was here destroyed. The roots of this plane tree in Stationers' Hall Court have been nourished on soil made rich by ashes of folios once worth more than their weight in gold.

Other works were destroyed in different ways, generally by being defaced with printers' ink.

Writing "from Lambehith the xxiiith of November, 1594," to "my very lovinge friendes the Mr. and Wardens of the Stacioners in London," the Archbishop of Canterbury of the day, ordering the suppression of a book called "Profitable and Pleasant Questions," directs:

> That forthwith you doe make diligent serche and enquirie for all the said bookes emprinted and the same to take into yor owne custodie untill you shall Receave further Directions for them. And soe I bydd you farewell.

The Archbishop under whose hand the order

was issued was Dr. John Whitgift, the founder of Whitgift's Hospital, Croydon.

"Hump. London" (Bishop Humphrey Henchman), is the signature to a document dated 1673 :

> These are to Require you to Damask or obliterate whatsoever Sheets you have seized of a Book entitled Leviathan, and for your so doing this shall be your warrant.

The Stationers' Company, although not one of the twelve 'great' Livery Companies of the City of London, is yet an important Guild.

The first Stationers' Hall was erected in 1551 in Milk Street, Cheapside, but a new Hall was erected in 1611 upon the present site, then occupied by Burgavenny House, the town residence of the Earls of Abergavenny. The Hall was destroyed by the Great Fire of 1666, and the present one was built in 1671, being refronted in 1800.

Until 1771, the Company had the sole and exclusive rights of issuing almanacs, but lost it in that year in an action-at-law. With the Master and Wardens still, to some extent, is vested the custom of binding apprentices to the printing trade.

Each apprentice bound at Stationers' Hall receives from the Company a Bible and Prayer Book, and young men who have served their time on payment of certain small fees take up the freedom of the Company.

Among the relics preserved at Stationers'

Hall is the composing stick used by Benjamin Franklin when working at a press in London.

Until the passing of the new Copyright Act of 1911, which came into operation June 29th, 1912, copyright in books, music, etc., was secured by registration at the Registry Office in Stationers' Hall Court; but, by the new Act, copyright was automatically secured by the delivery of copies of each new publication to the Library of the British Museum, for that institution and for the other four institutions which each by law receive one.

Some of the early entries in the registers of Stationers' Hall are of the most interesting character. In 1561 was

> Recevyd of Owyn Rogers for hs lycense for the pryntinge of Pers Plowman ..... xijd.

While among the entries of 1567 is the record that there was

> Received of Master Daye for his lycense for the printinge of a boke intituled Ewclide....iijs. iiijd.

This was the first translation of Euclid into English, and schoolboys who have suffered in their struggles with his propositions may be interested to know that Henry Billingsley, an Alderman of the City of London, was responsible for it.

Shakespeare's works, as they saw the light, were duly " Entered at Stationers' Hall," and in the register may be found, in handwriting

difficult to be deciphered, under date July 26th, 1602, the entry of a "Booke called the Revenge of hamlett Prince Denmarke, as yt was latelie acted by the Lord Chamberlyn his servauntes." Six years afterwards a certain Nichas Lynge registers his rights in "bookes whiche dyd belonge to hym:

8, a booke called hamlett.
9, The taminge of a Shrewe.
10, Romeo and Julett.
11, Loue's labour lost."

And against each item in the list is set the "vjd." which signifies the closing of the transaction.

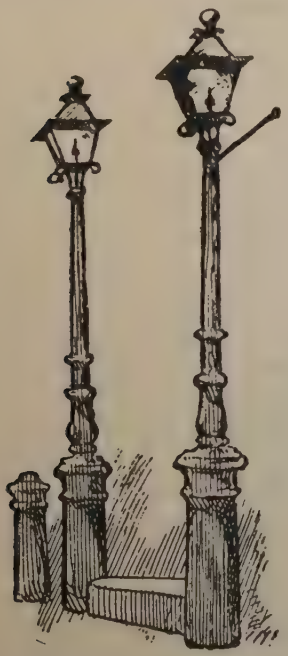
CHAPTER XI

OLD LONDON LAMP-POSTS

"THE useful and the beautiful," says a well-known aphorism, "are one." This, however, scarcely applies when we consider the lamp-posts of London's streets; the "lamp-standards," as, with more dignified language, the official world knows them. Beauty did not enter into the thought of the designers of these common objects of the kerbstone; but frugality did, with the result that we have often a curious and interesting design.

Some London lamp-posts are, in fact, historic. They have a story, like those two which stand on the pavement outside the old residence of Lord Falmouth, No. 2 St. James's Square. That mansion had not long been built when Admiral Boscawen, Lord Falmouth's ancestor, purchased it and settled down to enjoy a rest from his services at sea. When he put those lamp-posts there, he did so in order to have always some of his trophies before him when he went forth or looked from his windows. For they, or the bases from which they spring, are the spoils of war. In those times, and later, it was the

admirable frugal custom to convert captured guns to less sensational, though more enduring, use as street-posts. A number of such old guns, planted upright in the pavements up to their trunnions, may yet be seen on Tower Hill and elsewhere; their muzzles neatly tompioned with shot. It is curious to observe that the typical iron kerb-posts (or 'posties,' as a bygone generation of London's lower orders called them) directly derived their design from the suggestion offered by the genuine tompioned cannon.



LAMP-POSTS OUTSIDE ADMIRAL BOSCAWEN'S HOUSE

Thus Admiral Boscawen was not altogether original in his idea. Five old cannon he caused to be set up in front of his house, and two of these to be fitted with lamp-posts, where they remain to this day. They were taken from the French in the naval action by Anson off Finisterre in 1747, in which Boscawen, who was then merely a captain, bore a distinguished part. The prizes taken were the French ships *Serieux*, *Invincible*,

Diamant, *Jason*, *Rubis* and *La Gloire*, besides six Indiamen. It was a considerable victory and a great booty, and we must needs admire the wit, under trying circumstances, of the French Admiral, La Jonquière, who, on surrendering his sword to the British Admiral, was capable of the pretty and punning compliment: "Vous avez vaincu l'Invincible, et la Gloire vous suit."

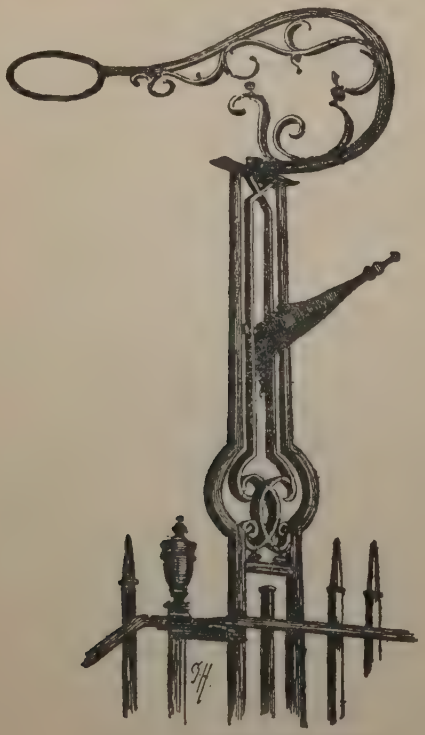
All the French war-ships were taken into our navy, but not so their guns, which were not serviceable to English shot and charges. Hence they were the perquisites of those captains who cared to have them, as we observe Boscawen did.

When he set up his trophies, the lamps they carried were of oil, for those were the times of very scarce and feeble illumination, and pedestrians at night needed the guidance of 'links,' carried by 'linkmen.' Hence we still see many 'link-extinguishers.'

Few people in these times of electric lighting know what was the function of a 'link-extinguisher.' The flippant reply, which is not an answer, is that it was used to extinguish links; but that leaves you only just where you were, and faced with the query, "What is, or was, a 'link,' and further, 'why'?"

It was, essentially, the same as a candle-extinguisher, and you don't often see such a thing as that in use to-day. Candle-extinguishers date back to times long before wax candles and small wicks were introduced. Initially,

they belonged to an age when tallow and thick wicks together made a blown-out candle a shocking offence to the nose, not to be endured.



An old Link-Extinguisher

And it was even so with the link-extinguishers. Links were torches made of tar and tow. In the eighteenth century, when public street-lighting was but partial and bad at the best, the

'linkmen' were necessary to light the great personages, and smaller, home from parties. Arrived at their destination, the hired 'linkmen' thrust their flaming and smoking 'links' into those iron, lily-shaped extinguishers that then were an essential part of the equipment at the door of every considerable person. In the pleasant artistic fashion of those times, the actual extinguisher was generally made a part of an elaborate design in wrought iron. Many may yet be seen in Berkeley Square, Cavendish Square, Great Cumberland Place, the Adelphi and elsewhere.

Until electricity came to the aid of street-lighting, the streets of London were by no means brilliantly illuminated. In 1809 the then new and strange coal-gas illuminant was experimentally used, defying the opinion, not only of ordinary people, but also of Sir Humphry Davy, who was not so far advanced as to think it practicable. He went so far, indeed, as to commit himself to the opinion that "it would be as easy to bring down a bit of the moon to light London as to succeed in doing so with gas." Thus do even the scientific prove themselves ignorant. Winsor, the pioneer, was, like most pioneers, laughed at. But in that same year, 1809, when Sir Humphry Davy had declared the idea to be so absurd, Winsor's gas-lamps were installed in front of the Prince Regent's palace, Carlton House, Pall Mall; and in the following year the first shop to be thus lighted attracted great

attention. This was Ackermann's Fine Art Repository, in the Strand. After 1814 gas-lighting became pretty general; although Grosvenor Square long stood upon the ancient ways, and was content with oil until as late as 1842.

THE OLD WAR-OFFICE CRESSET

Those times are now themselves antique, but many Londoners well can recollect the nights when the town was illuminated in honour of Queen Victoria's birthday, or that of the Prince of Wales, November 9. Vast crowds thronged the streets to see "the illuminations": devices of every kind in coloured glass, lighted by gas. If the weather on these occasions chanced to be boisterous, a large proportion of the gas jets would be blown out, and the odour of unconsumed gas is a keen reminiscence of such nights.

All the clubs along Pall Mall had their cressets flaring with gas. These are still a feature outside those buildings, although, with the introduction of electric lighting, it is years since they have been used. The old War Office in Pall Mall, taken down, with the Royal Automobile Club now on

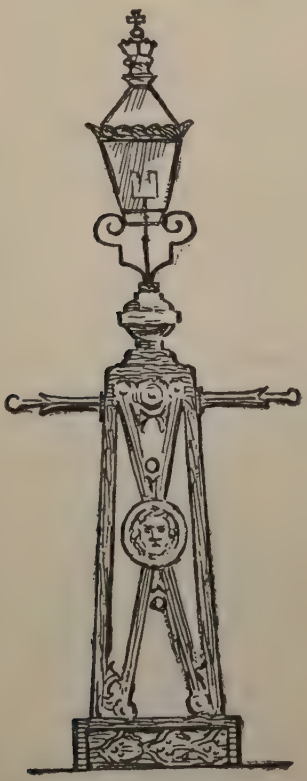
its site, had some remarkable gas-cresset standards, modelled in the likeness of the ancient lamps of the Strozzi Palace in Milan; but bearing the material decoration of three cannon, and the abbreviated quotation from Ovid: *sua tela tonanti.* This was thought, no doubt, by that Secretary of State for War (or " at " war, as he technically was styled) who caused these ornamental standards to be installed, an extremely appropriate tag. Pity is it that we do not know which of these successive ministers at war it was who commanded sufficient familiarity with the classics to make the application of Jove-like arbitraments to the British War Office. For the line in Ovid is *In arbitrium Jovi sua tela tonanti.*

These cressets have disappeared, and no one seems to know what has become of them.

The classic idea prevailed at the time when gas came in and when these decorations were installed. To that period belongs Regent Street, and in the Quadrant may yet be noticed a few of the old lamp-posts which presumably were designed by Nash to be in keeping with his architectural idea. They embody the idea of the old Roman symbol of authority, the axe and fasces, with which design the lower part of the post is finished off.

Several of these fine specimens have disappeared, as also of recent years have the old lamp-posts in and around Westminster, which bore on their cast iron bases the cyphers of George the Third and Fourth. A group composed of a

lamp-standard, a street-refuge and four iron angle-posts stood until recently in Waterloo



One of the Waterloo Bridge Lamp-Posts

Place, by the Athenæum Club. All bore the crown and cypher of William the Fourth. But this has been taken down. The angle-posts

will be found beside the statues of Florence Nightingale and Lord Herbert of Lea.

There are eighteen very fine lamp-standards on Waterloo Bridge, cast in iron and handsomely designed, by way of exception to the common run of such things.

They are supposed to have been designed by the eminent architect, Professor Cockerell, brother-in-law of Rennie, designer of the bridge itself; and were an integral part of the classic feeling of the whole structure. There they were, and there they had been in position, two over each of the nine arches, since the opening of the bridge, in 1817. In March, 1904, it occurred to some extra-officious official of the London County Council to cause these handsome lamp-standards to be removed and sold as scrap-metal, and to replace them by inferior articles. A protest vigorously made by a body then styling itself the ' Architectural Vigilance Society ' exposed this singular piece of vandalism, and, after some trouble, the original lamp-standards were recovered and reinstated, and there they remain to this day.

The classic trend of all decorative art at the opening of the nineteenth century is again absurdly shown in the design of a lamp-post at the extreme other end of London: that busy part of the docks which impinges on Tower Hill. This is an exceedingly sturdy iron column from which springs a Roman galley, or trireme. The post may not be regarded as a very successful

design, but, as a leaning-stock for the idle, it could not well be bettered.

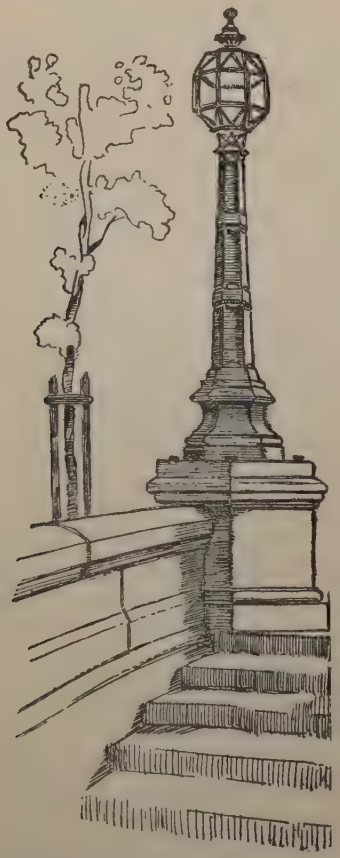
LAMP-POST ON TOWER HILL

Several attempts have been made from time to time to improve the design of street lamp-posts. Those which at regular intervals decorate the river wall of the Victoria Embankment were a great advance in their day. They symbolically are carried on well-modelled figures of dolphins. Among the West End clubs, the highly decorative groups supporting the lamps outside the Junior United Service Club in Charles Street, Haymarket, were modelled by a sculptor, John Thomas, and are very stately. They comprise chubby cupids presiding over trophies of Roman helmets, swords and other warlike accoutrements, and perhaps we may take them to indicate that these members of the army and navy are successful alike in " the field, the court, the grove."

But electric lighting for streets seems to have, for the present at any rate, destroyed any attempt at artistic design; for no one in London yet has grappled with the problem of evolving anything beautiful out of the gaunt and lofty posts up to now in use for the purpose.

The lamp-standards of Trafalgar Square, on the terrace overlooking it, in front of the National Gallery, were designed at the time the Square itself was constructed. They are of a sturdy and handsome design, although, from a purely illuminating point of view, they are not successful, in spite of the curiously faceted lamp-frames. These were the idea of a hopeful inventor, whose impression, derived perhaps from the refractive qualities of a cut, faceted diamond, was that the

different angles at which the glass was set would multiply the light. He styled it the "panopticon" principle.



One of the Trafalgar Square "Panopticon" Lamps

CHAPTER XII

MY LORD MAYOR AND HIS CITY

To be Lord Mayor of London is a great and glorious thing. He is the successor of seven hundred and thirty-four Mayors since Henry Fitz Ailwyn, in 1189, and four hundred and thirty-seven Lord Mayors. Popularly, he is, perhaps, held in the greater respect because he is a successor of Dick Whittington, who was Mayor four times: not merely the "thrice Lord Mayor of London Town" of the ballad, and not 'Lord' Mayor either, for there was no 'Lord' Mayor until 1486.

My Lord Mayor rules over a day population always increasing, and a resident population that becomes continually less. In 1866, the day population of the City was 170,133; in 1881, 261,061; in 1891, 301,384. It is now 364,061. The resident population in 1841 was 125,008; in 1871 it had fallen to 74,897, and by 1891 to 37,694. It is now 13,071.

A census taken on May 4th, 1891, of passengers entering the City gave the following results:

From 5 a.m. to 9 p.m.	1,100,636
„ 9 to 12 and 1 to 5 a.m.	85,458
	1,186,094

MY LORD MAYOR AND HIS CITY

The Lord Mayor is a more important personage than the public generally may suppose. Although he takes the oath that he will "well and lawfully serve the King's Majesty in the office of Mayor," he is very much the Monarch of the City. Within the bounds of it and its Liberties his precedence is next after that of the Sovereign, whoever else may be present, and he has powers that seem autocratic. Without his permission, no troops may pass through the City, and even then they must not carry fixed bayonets, nor march with colours flying. Many years ago, Lord John Russell, at the time Home Secretary, was made to realise these rights and prerogatives, when the then Lord Mayor successfully kept the pass, and, further, declined to permit any military after ten o'clock in the morning.

My Lord Mayor's rank is that of an Earl, and as such he assumes the robe of that station when, as also an *ex-officio* member of the Privy Council, he seeks private audience of the King, which of right he may at any time do. Another right is that of visiting the Tower of London at any time of night or day, whenever he pleases; and daily the sentries' pass-word is brought to him.

So any Lord Mayor should, it would seem to a romantic imagination, be an exceedingly proud and happy man. It is well also that he should be a very rich one, for his year of office is one of great personal expense, and, if on November

9th he and his Sheriffs do not provide a good spectacular Lord Mayor's Show, there is dissatisfaction. Moreover, it is a period of incessant engagements, and there is a curious unwritten law that no Lord Mayor should sleep outside his City during his year of office. Whether actually it is strictly observed, I do not know.

The Lord Mayor lives at the Mansion House, that great stone building on your right as you stand in Poultry and face the Royal Exchange. You might innocently suppose him to reside at the Guildhall, but that is not the case. He has had his official residence at the Mansion House since it was built for the purpose in 1740-53, in which last year Sir Crisp Gascoigne took up residence.

If in London you seek information, you "ask a p'liceman"—that is proverbial And it took my fancy to ask one of the City police where the Lord Mayor lived before there was a Mansion House. He said he "supposed he lived at home," and I think my ready-witted constable is to be commended. But he was wrong. Before there was a Mansion House—or, at any rate, *that* Mansion House, the Lord Mayors had an earlier official residence, and it exists to this day. It is now "Williamson's Hotel," in Bow Lane, Cheapside, a retired, little-noticed building, behind ornamental iron gates, in a court-yard: that was the first official Mayoral residence, although No. 73 Cheapside has been given the same name. It was built by

Wren, 1668-9, for Sir William Turner, Lord Mayor, but was probably Sir William's own personal property.

And thus the Lord Mayor reigns for a year. It is a glorious time, but fleeting, and the next morning he is just one of those "Aldermen who have passed the Chair," and often, until recent years, just a plain esquire. But in modern practice very few are those Lord Mayors who have not, during the term of their office, been knighted or baroneted; so they do not return altogether from those heights to their former status.

The heraldic coat of the City of London is a red cross on a silver field, charged with a short Roman sword in the upper dexter quarter. It is the sword of St. Paul, from ancient times the City's patron saint; but in popular legend it is the dagger with which Sir William Walworth, Mayor (not 'Lord' Mayor, for there was not a Lord Mayor before 1486), slew Wat Tyler, in 1381, or did not slay him, as the case may be. The Fishmongers' Company have in their Hall the actual dagger of Walworth's, as they claim; and in the Guildhall there is a modern painting representing that historic scene in Smithfield. But another account has it that Walworth unseated the rebel leader with a blow from a mace, and that as he lay on the ground he was despatched by Sir John Philpot with a sword: whence comes the sword borne by that family on their heraldic shield. Here is a direct

conflict of testimony; and, as I was not present myself to witness what happened, I will not presume to declare which version (if indeed either) is correct.

That the sword in the City arms has anything whatever to do with the Wat Tyler incident is abundantly disproved by the sword appearing in them at a much earlier period. The supporters of the City's shield are the well-known dragons, but they were a seventeenth-century innovation, their predecessors having been lions since the time of Richard the Second until that period.

The curiously shaped furred cap borne as a crest is sometimes styled (by those who know nothing about such things) a "Cap of Maintenance." It resembles a Cap of Maintenance about as nearly as it does a cloth cap of to-day; but we have to bear in mind that the term has often been very inexactly used. This City of London crest is actually a representation of the furred cap of sable still worn by my Lord Mayor's chief Swordbearer, as publicly seen in the annual Show, or pageant. It is eight inches high and broadens out as it ascends. The style, so odd to-day, was a customary headgear among persons of quality in the reigns of Richard the Second and Henry the Fourth; and as worn by them had no suggestion of being Caps of Maintenance. Exactly what such a real cap was like cannot better be shown than in the accompanying sketch from one of two representations in the great fifteenth-century windows in the north transept

of York Minster, in which the Lord Mayor of York, a venerable-looking personage of decidedly Jewish aspect, is seen to be wearing one. It is apparently furred, and the back is turned up with ermine.

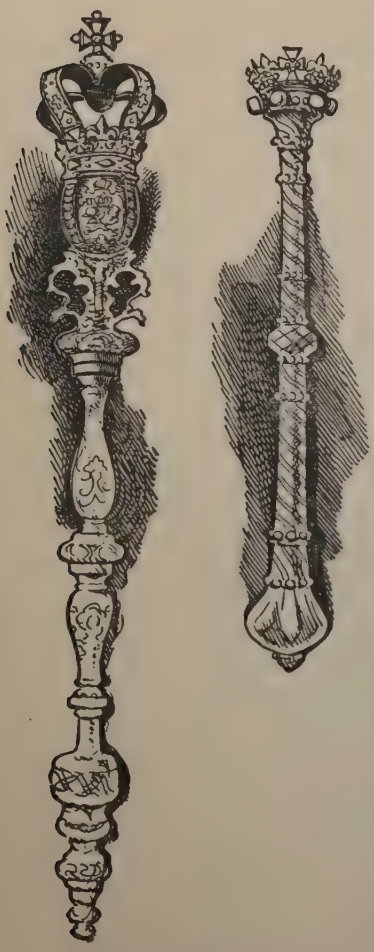
The Lord Mayor of London's Swordbearer's alleged Cap of Maintenance is not, and was never

CAP OF MAINTENANCE

like that; although it was not always like what it is now. In the seventeenth century it became a cap of crimson velvet. For repairing it, in 1614, the sum of £3 18s. was spent, and, in 1629, another £3. In 1675 the old Cap was reported worn out, and in 1688 a new one, in style like the present, was purchased for £11. In 1746 we hear of this being repaired, and in 1777 this

also was past mending, for a new article was obtained. A further new Cap was ordered in 1813, and no doubt many more since then.

I do not propose to write a disquisition here on the City regalia, which are too important to be discussed shortly, but mention can hardly be omitted of that notable item the Lord Mayor's Sceptre. This is in the nature of a small mace, but has always officially been styled a "Sceptre." It is handed to the newly elected Lord Mayor, as a symbol of his sovereignty over his domain and is used only on such other occasional State occasions as a Royal Coronation. The Sceptre, sometimes styled the "Crystal Mace," is a miniature compared with the Great Mace whose gilded head is seen projecting from my Lord Mayor's gilded state carriage in the Lord Mayor's Show, for, while the Great Mace is 5 ft. 3 ins. in length, the Sceptre measures only 1 ft. 6 ins. As it exists to-day the Sceptre is of various periods, not all easily determined. The head, of gold, ornamented with four crosses and four fleurs-de-lys, arranged alternately and set with pearls, is of the fifteenth century. It is further enriched with irregular uncut rubies and with sapphires, having large pearls between, on the gold fillet supporting the head. The upper shaft, of crystal, engraved with a spiral thread, may be so ancient as Saxon times. The gold fillets on it are set with pearls. The lower shaft is also of crystal, together with the base; but the central knob, strangely enough, is merely



Lord Mayor's Sceptre and Great Mace

glass, cut in facets. It dates from about 1845, and replaces an older, also of glass.

The Great Mace of to-day is not older than 1735, and bears the name of Sir Edward Bellamy, Lord Mayor in that year. It is silver-gilt. The famous Sword of Justice, the "Pearl Sword," so-called because its scabbard is richly embroidered with pearls, is said to have been the gift of Queen Elizabeth, in 1570. The blade bears the Solingen wolf trade-mark.

Annually the accounts of the City of London are printed and publicly issued. If they were not so published, I would not presume to write

or to comment on the domestic affairs of the ancient and time-honoured Corporation; and, if I do so now, it is merely to extract from them some instructive and entertaining items. The latest available among these statements of affairs, issued by the City Chamberlain, comprises the period between April 1st, 1920, and March 31st, 1921, and is the 288th issue, reckoning from 1633. All earlier accounts are lost, destroyed probably in the Great Fire, with the sole exception of two years in the reign of Queen Elizabeth. The accounts were first printed in 1784, and the current printed issue is the 137th.

I do not propose thoroughly to analyse the accounts or to go into details about what is styled " the City's cash," but incidentally, now I am in the way of it, I can show you what the " City Purse " is like, that purse which each successive outgoing Lord Mayor hands to the new ruler.

I look askance upon those hostile critics of the Corporation of the City who would ' reform ' it, for it ever has been public-spirited and generous, and not a few among the Lord Mayors have been, in times when to be so was dangerous, champions of public rights. The City saved Epping Forest at a time when, but for its action, that precious-to-London woodland certainly might have been lost; and later it saved Burnham Beeches. Apart from those chief enterprises, it has secured numerous other commons and spaces, all more or less far-removed from the

City's own bounds and interests. And it has done this without any afterthought.

The London County Council, a body whose history, dating only from 1888, is an insignificant thing beside the Corporation's venerable age, has also acquired lands within and without its own territory; but it has done so out of the rates. What it has done costs you something, but the City's benevolence does not. It is financed out of "the City's cash." Moreover, the London County Council's extra-territorial commitments were and are made with an eye at some time towards an argument that, as it has expended money outside its own bounds, those bounds should, sooner or later, be enlarged, to include the spots it has thus paid for.

It costs the City a good round sum annually to maintain those commons and woods it has purchased or controls. In 1920-21 the following disbursements were made :

	£	s.	d.
West Ham Park	4,191	4	11
West Wickham Common	196	7	8
Bunhill Fields	514	15	7
Highgate Wood	1,107	0	9
St. Paul's Churchyard	739	7	5
Burnham Beeches	1,695	8	2
Coulsdon and other Commons	598	2	7
Queen's Park, Kilburn	854	10	11
	9,896	18	0

In addition there was the cost of Epping Forest administration, the total coming to £20,345 7s. 4d.

The Tower Bridge is itself a fine spectacular object, particularly when the great hinged leaves of the roadway ('bascules,' as they are technically named) are opened by the hydraulic machinery, to permit the passage of tall-masted ships. The annual cost of maintaining the Tower Bridge was about £17,000, and each time the bascules were raised and lowered the cost was over £2. Fewer great ships now pass beneath, and the roadway is not so often raised. And the upkeep of the bridge, according to the latest accounts, is much more costly. So, if analysed, the cost of raising and lowering would perhaps be found more than £4 a time.

The cost of maintaining and working the Tower Bridge, according to those last returns, was £37,155 14s. 8d., in those twelve months. The items making up this amount are:

Resident Superintending Engineer's and Bridgemaster's salary	£1,004	8	6
Consulting Engineer's Retaining Fee	52	10	6
Wages of Staff	18,793	13	8
Fidelity Guarantees	4	1	0
Pension Funds Contributions	164	18	10
Pensions	17	13	4
Uniforms	437	14	10
Gas-lighting	3,305	4	0

Cleansing	2,450	0	0
Coke and Coal	3,353	6	8
Oil and Stores	680	17	5
Fire and Boiler Insurance	194	6	10
Water	65	19	2
Maintenance and Repairs to Paving	1,323	4	8
Machinery Repairs	566	0	7
Ironmongery and Tools	315	18	7
Hydraulic Power	98	16	3
Sundry Artificers	146	9	7
Rent and Telephone	62	16	3
Hire of Steam Tug	3,960	0	0
Printing and Stationery	69	2	5
Medical Examination Fees	0	10	6
Miscellaneous Expenses	39	5	10
Timber	46	17	9
	£37,155	14	8

Dogs sometimes find themselves on the roadway when it begins to rise, and generally exhibit every sign of terror, sometimes retreating, or occasionally making a panic-stricken rush to the rising end, only to find themselves rolling back, as the gradient becomes too steep.

Pigeons make their nest and rear their young at the very points of the under-framework of the bascules, building their nests in such a manner that neither the eggs nor the young birds fall out, even though these ponderous iron leaves work through an angle of 81 degrees.

But, after all, perhaps the queerest thing connected with the Tower Bridge is the false claim made by the Germans, during the Great War, to have destroyed it, in a Zeppelin raid. The Huns went even to the length of issuing a medal illustrating this highly imaginary exploit.

Public corporations, like the City of London and other municipal bodies, must sometimes feel inclined to look with disfavour upon those enthusiastic committees who set up statues. Generally those statues are free gifts, but we do not hear of their being endowed with an income for cleaning and repairing, works that must sometimes be performed. A statue is a charge upon the community, and rarely is there one which, artistically, is worth its keep. No one would or could pretend that the bronze statue of Rowland Hill, behind the Royal Exchange, is one of those few, although historically he is worth celebration as the originator of penny postage. His proper place is in front of one of the General Post Office buildings; but, of course, the G.P.O. Department would not like that. They would rather have a statue of Mr. Kellaway, whose chief title to fame seems likely to be that, under his ægis as Postmaster-General, penny postage was abolished for a period, and became twopenny. The City accounts show that in 1920-21, the Rowland Hill statue repairs cost £70.

The Royal Exchange, one of the City's properties, by the same showing, in that period was

profitable. Its Dr. account was £732 12s. 9d., and the Cr. side was £10,680 4s. 3d. That profit of £8,947 11s. 6d. is, however, greatly lessened by heavier expenditure in other periods. It remains a mystery to most people of what use the quadangle of the Royal Exchange is to-day; for merchants do not meet there, as theoretically they should.

The City's hospitalities are famous and stately, from the annual Lord Mayor's banquet to receptions of Royal and distinguished personages, accompanied sometimes by the presentation of the "Freedom of the City" in a costly gold casket. It cost to receive Viscount French of Ypres, on May 17th, 1920, £485 3s. 10d. A portion of that sum paid for goldsmiths' and silversmiths' Swords of Honour, £210 0s. 0d.

The expenses of receiving Royal personages are higher. The reception of the Prince of Wales, December 7th, 1920, involved a bill of £2,653 6s. 4d.

Those fine institutions, the Guildhall Library and the Art Gallery, in the same period, cost £13,366 4s. 6d.

In the City Police accounts, payments made by City firms and others, for watching private premises, came to £10,756 12s. 1d. But no longer do I perceive the "Key Suspense Account," by which it was shown how a large sum is paid annually by City firms entrusting keys to the police so that they may enter and inspect premises unoccupied at night: a service for which

an individually small fee is charged. Changes in setting forth the accounts have probably included this item in the larger sum. Nor does a sum of some £243 any longer appear as paid annually by omnibus companies for the privilege of pulling up outside the Mansion House. Manners and customs change without their being noticed, and, when I asked a City constable if he had ever heard of such a payment, he had not. "Besides," said he, "the buses *don't* stop outside the Mansion House, they stop in Cornhill and Queen Victoria Street and Cheapside." And, behold, it was, when I looked, even so, and, when I insisted upon it that once they did stop as described, he said, "Ah! that was before my time," and looked at me as though I had re-appeared from the loom of ages ago.

CHAPTER XIII

THE STORY OF ST. PAUL'S CATHEDRAL

On February 25th, 1723, died Sir Christopher Wren, in the 91st year of his age, leaving as his greatest monument the Cathedral Church of St. Paul, whose great dome (technically a 'cupola,' but the public will have it 'dome') in misty splendour presides over the City of London, and in sense typifies London itself:

> "A huge dim cupola, like a foolscap crown
> On a fool's head—and there is London Town."

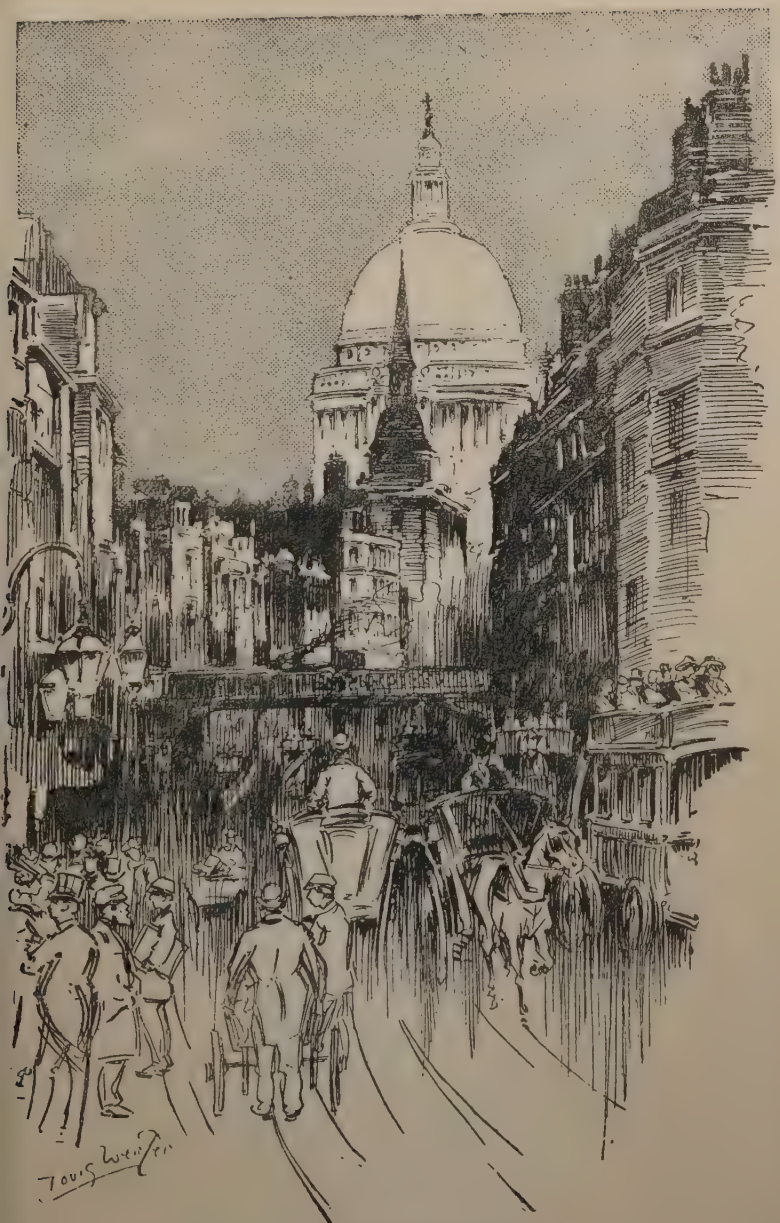
That is Byron, in *Don Juan*, who was not characteristic if not satirical. But those who inhabit beneath that dome, or cupola, in general order their lives better than he did.

In December, 1897, was celebrated the two-hundredth year since the reopening of St. Paul's Cathedral, after the rebuilding following the Great Fire of 1666. The building was not actually completed in 1697, although thirty-one years had passed since the destruction of Old St. Paul's. Four years had yet to pass before the ball and cross surmounting the dome brought the work to an end. But sufficient had been

done to render divine service possible. It is the usual practice, in the case of cathedrals which ever have occupied long years in building, to consecrate the first completed portion—usually the choir, and hold a service there.

This is not the place for entering into those age-old discussions as to what buildings occupied the site of St. Paul's from the earliest times. Whether or not a temple to Diana stood here in the Roman era is yet a matter for dispute; but Sir Christopher Wren has put it on record that, in digging the foundations for his Cathedral, he found in succession three strata pointing to older civilisations; firstly, tombs of the Saxon period; secondly, British graves, and, beneath all these, at a depth of eighteen feet, evidences of a Roman cemetery.

We know absolutely nothing of what the Saxon church was like, and can only infer that it was a wooden building, from the record that it was utterly destroyed in the first of the five conflagrations that have in the course of many centuries destroyed the religious edifices that have occupied the site. This first of the St. Paul's fires took place in 1087. It gave a not undesired opportunity for Bishop Maurice, the successor of Lanfranc, to rebuild the Cathedral on a more extensive and imposing scale, and in stone. The Normans were ever great in the building way. The Norman bishops built on so vast a scale that not infrequently they died and were succeeded by a long line of churchmen



ST. PAUL'S, FROM FLEET STREET

before their great edifices were completed. It was even so with the Norman St. Paul's, which was not finished when the second fire came, in the reign of King Stephen, and swept it almost entirely away.

We need not follow the course of the rebuilding that succeeded, but mention may be made of the earthquake that in the reign of Richard the First threw down the spire, and of the fourth fire, which, in 1561, destroyed the lofty wooden steeple, much the loftiest in England: 534 feet, higher than that of Salisbury spire by 130 feet, and 164 feet higher than the cross cresting Wren's dome.

That fire of 1561 originated in a terrific thunder-storm, in which the steeple was struck by lightning. For four hours the fire blazed, half melting the bells, which crashed through into the building, and consumed the high-pitched lead-covered roofs of nave and choir. The unfortunate Cathedral was a roofless ruin, a disaster held by the Roman Catholics to be a "judgment for the adoption of the reformed religion in England."

However that might have been, St. Paul's was not this time so badly burned but that new roofs and a restoration sufficed to set it again in order. Queen Elizabeth gave a thousand gold marks towards the good work, and the worth of another thousand in timber, and the clergy and the City gave prodigious sums. So swiftly was the work done that on November 1st, in that same

year, it was completed, and the Lord Mayor and the City Guilds attended a thanksgiving service in the shelter of those new roofs to which they had so handsomely contributed. But never again did Old St. Paul's regain its chief wonder and glory, that great central steeple.

Let us pause awhile to see exactly what that Cathedral was like, before the Great Fire of 1666 carried it away for ever, in smoke and flame. A view etched by Hollar shows us that the exterior had been outrageously treated by Inigo Jones, in accordance with the Renaissance ideas of that age. The eastern limb indeed retained its Gothic features and graceful flying-buttresses, unimpaired; but the exterior of the transepts, the nave and the west front had been converted into the strange semblance of a classic building. The interior had escaped that indignity, and had much the same appearance as the nave of Westminster Abbey has now.

But the laxity of those times had permitted strange secular uses for the nave, then known as "Paul's Walk." How it was used and degraded may be judged from the proclamations issued in the reigns both of Mary and Elizabeth. They forbade anyone to carry beer-casks, baskets of fish, bread, flesh or fruit, or to lead mules or horses through the Cathedral; and such things as fighting with swords or shooting with hand-guns were prohibited. Using the Cathedral as a place of assignment for the paying of debts was also forbidden. We are to consider that

authorities do not commonly go out of their way to prohibit offences which have not been committed and are not, indeed, of frequent occurrence; and it thus follows that all those things had been done, as a matter of course, in St. Paul's Cathedral.

Those proclamations, however, had little effect, although the penalties provided fines and imprisonment for the putting of offenders in the pillory, and the nailing of their ears to posts. The sacrilegious still paraded the nave, and all sorts of bad characters plotted in the aisles. Midnight murders were planned there, and sudden disappearances arranged for. The "Unemployed" of that age hung about the supposed tomb of Humphrey, the "good Duke of Gloucester," really that of Sir John Beauchamp, and thus originated the phrase, long current, of "dining with Duke Humphrey," that is, going dinnerless. They dined thus with him every day, and, if they were not a goodly company, they were, at any rate, a numerous one and as dangerous a crew as might well be met. A fair rose noble coin rung down upon the tomb of the good Duke would serve to hire you anything you liked, in the way of villainy, from an abduction to a stab in the back in the crooked lanes of Old London, while, would you learn the latest prices of commodities, you could read them in the advertisements fixed on wall or pillar, and, reading them, have your pockets picked, with promptitude and despatch, by one or other of the numerous

thieves who plied their calling within the sacred precincts.

It is not generally known that we do not, by any means, owe the present St. Paul's entirely to the accident of the Great Fire. It had already been decided to rebuild the Cathedral, and the fire merely saved the trouble of pulling down. A Royal Commission had, in fact, reported, advising the rebuilding, and had estimated the cost at £22,536, appointing Inigo Jones architect.

At this interesting stage the proceedings halted, and Villiers, Duke of Buckingham, took the golden opportunity thus offered of stealing the stones collected for the purpose, and built a great town mansion with them, where Buckingham and Villiers Streets now are to be found, hard by the Adelphi.

Inigo Jones had his chance when Charles the First reigned. The king loved the Anglican High Church movement. Indeed, he was so committed to it, with Archbishop Laud, that eventually both died upon the scaffold, really, if not ostensibly, for that cause. That is why the Anglicans still hold Charles the First to be a martyr, and wish to reinstate the prayers once customary on the day of his execution, January 30th, in the Book of Common Prayer, from which they were removed many years ago.

King Charles was so pleased with the design by Inigo Jones for the rebuilding of the west front that he urged its immediate beginning, and made a large donation towards the cost.

INTERIOR OF THE NAVE LOOKING EAST

Laud also gave largely. That work was completed, and other portions were being proceeded with, when the strife between the King and Parliament began. London was for the Parliament, and it fared ill with the King's architectural projects and all those engaged in them. The works were stopped. Of the funds subscribed, £17,000 remained, and the Parliament seized the sum, for its warlike needs. The arrears of pay of one regiment were settled in kind—surely the most whimsical military payment ever made! This consisted of the scaffolding erected round St. Paul's tower. The ecclesiastical furniture of the Cathedral, together with the sacramental vessels, was sold, and the building itself was foully profaned by the Puritans; the choir becoming a barrack for cavalry, and the west front let out as shops.

At the restoration of 1660, the question of rebuilding St. Paul's was again taken up. There was at that time in London a young architect whose name was beginning to be known. It was Christopher Wren. He was the son of the Dean of Windsor, and a nephew of the Bishop of Norwich, and a good Churchman. He had travelled and studied in Italy, and had brought back to England a zealous enthusiasm for the Renaissance, which, as we have already seen, in the work of Inigo Jones, had, years before, made some progress in the land. Young Wren was invited to make a report on St. Paul's. He drew this up in sweeping fashion, practically con-

demning the whole of the Cathedral to be rebuilt, with the exception of that new west front. Wren's proposals were accepted, and he was duly appointed architect. But before a ladder could be raised towards the works, the Great Fire came and swept all away.

Not until much of the City of London arose from those ashes, and not before many of the parish churches were rebuilt, were the foundations of the new Cathedral begun, and the first stone laid, June 21st, 1675. It is a curious authenticated fact that, surveying the split and calcined stones of Old St. Paul's, and desiring a workman to bring a stone to mark the centre of the new building's site, that stone should be one bearing the one word, 'Resurgam,' *i.e.*, "I shall rise again." The incident seems to have suggested the remarkable sculpture which now may be seen filling the tympanum over the west front of that fabled bird, the phœnix, rising from flames.

The building we now see is not quite what Wren originally intended. His first design, of which a large model is to be seen in a room over the north transept, bears a closer resemblance than does the completed work to St. Peter's at Rome, and it does not possess the majesty of outline of the building familiar to all Londoners. The dome in the original design is not nearly so effective as the executed work. It is flatter, and the peristyle of columns beneath is continuous and not emphasized at every fourth

column by a solid mass of masonry as now seen.

Wren himself was not pleased that his first design should be rejected. All through the long years of building he was hampered and baulked of his ideas. Although a Churchman, his ideals were somewhat democratic and congregational. We see as much in all his City parish churches; which, as a matter of exact fact, are technically more preaching-houses, or rooms, than they are of the accepted ecclesiastical type. He had also intended St. Paul's to be essentially a place of few reservations and chiefly one of public worship. The Roman Catholic brother of the King, James, Duke of York (afterwards James the Second), had, however, a good deal to do with the actual passing of the St. Paul's plans, and he it was who insisted upon the provision of those side-chapels which are a feature of the nave. The architect burst into tears at this spoiling, as he considered it, of his design, but he was obliged to submit.

At the dedication service in the choir in 1697, the sermon was preached by Compton, Bishop of London, from the appropriate text, "I was glad when they said unto me, Let us go into the House of the Lord."

In 1710 the last stone of the cupola which crowns the lantern over the dome was placed in position, and Wren's work was done. No longer was he to be, as Sarah, Duchess of Marlborough said, "dragged up and down in a basket two or three times a week for an insignificant

£200 a year." She was alluding to his being thus hoisted and lowered up and down the scaffolding, and to his by no means extravagant pay.

Structurally, the Cathedral was completed, but decoratively it has never yet been, and perhaps never will be. The internal decoration of costly marbles and mosaics always contemplated by Wren has been begun in our own time, but begun only. The building itself was almost entirely paid for from the proceeds of a special tax levied on every chaldron of coals brought into the Port of London. The total cost was £736,952 2s. 3¼d. Coal, it has wittily been said, has had its revenge on St. Paul's, by blackening with its soot the exterior. In the library is a list of subscriptions in which Charles the Second's name is set down for £1,000, but it does not appear that he ever paid it. This is quite characteristic of the Merry Monarch.

Wren died at the great age of ninety, in 1723. He lies in the crypt, and was the first to be buried there. His unpretentious tomb bears the eloquent phrase: "Lector, si monumentum requiris, circumspice."

Let us now see what is the size of St. Paul's in comparison with St. Peter's at Rome :

	Length	Height
St. Peter's	669	432 feet
St. Paul's	500	365

Old St. Paul's was much longer, extending somewhat further east, and as far west as where

the Queen Anne statue now stands. The length was 700 feet.

Wren's great building was much hindered by

FIGURE EMBLEMATIC OF THE NORTH AMERICAN COLONIES: QUEEN ANNE'S MONUMENT

the difficulty of procuring a continued supply of Portland stone, quarried in the Isle of Portland, and thus a good deal of the fabric is less substantially built than it would otherwise have been. The four great piers supporting the enormous

weight of the dome are little more than rubble, with a thin surface of Portland stone. Hence in recent years the dome, or cupola to speak technically, was found to have settled six inches to the south-west, partly because the south-west pier was the weakest and was being crushed under the weight of the inner and outer domes and lantern, estimated at 32,000 tons. It has now been solidly reconstructed. Even in Wren's own time, that particular pier had to be repaired.

A further fault is that the foundations go only $4\frac{1}{2}$ feet below the level of the crypt. They rest, too, on sand and gravel, water-bearing and rendered unsafe by the making of modern sewers and deep foundations of recent neighbouring buildings.

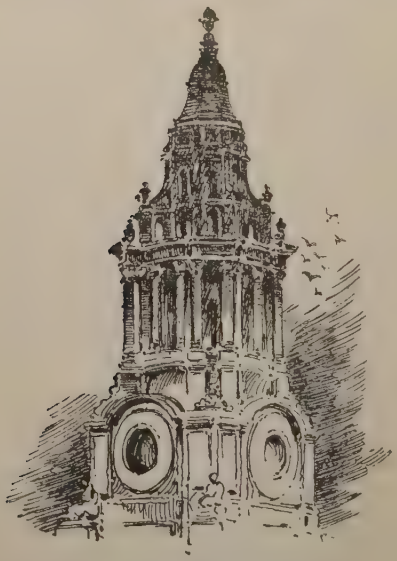
The construction of St. Paul's dome is by no means what it appears to be, and those who, looking upon it from without, think it to be the outer skin of the space they see within, are woefully deceived. Lofty as the dome appears to be when viewed from inside the Cathedral, it is only a much smaller and lower feature, whose crown rises very little higher than the external coping at the base of the outer dome. We may thus say that actually the outer dome begins to rise from that point where the inner one leaves off. While the inner dome is of brick, the outer, beneath its leaden covering, is of wood, supported by a perfect maze of timbers. Should a really vast London fire break out, it would not improbably involve the destruction of the outer

dome, and that perhaps of the Cathedral itself.

Visitors who pay their sixpences to see the crypt, where Nelson and Wellington, Lord Roberts, and many famous painters lie, or who mount the many stairs to the Library, the Whispering Gallery, and up the iron ladders into the ball beneath the cross, think they have "seen St. Paul's." But they have by no means seen all of it. The Cathedral is not, in fact, shown as a whole, publicly, and, if it were, few are those who would make the exhausting tour. The place is more full of hiding-holes and secret passages than any old mansion famous for such things, although, of course, the holes and passages of the Cathedral were not actually made for hiding. Why, however, some were made at all is not easily to be explained. No one has ever yet given the reason for the circular staircase that ascends inside the great western portico.

The crypt is less solemn than it would be if the Cathedral office of works were not there, hard by the Wellington tomb. All the year round that office is occupied and the carpenters and joiners, painters and glaziers, always have plenty to do. The great victor of Waterloo lies well within the visitors' hearing of the gas-engine that generates the electrical supply. An exploration of the Cathedral's secret passages in its hollow walls, up and down stairs thick with ages-old dust, in pitchy darkness save for the glimmer of the guide's lantern, results in two or three days' aching limbs; and to stand in the south-western

campanile tower where hangs the giant bell, Great Paul, 17 tons in weight, and listen to the stunning noise of his ringing in the five minutes at one o'clock daily, is to be dazed and deafened. Close at hand, it is just an intolerable noise; from the neighbouring streets the hoarse, un-



One of the Campaniles

pleasant sound of Great Paul is like the deep growling of some implacable wild beast. But Great Paul rarely is rung now. Cast at Loughborough, in 1882, it was too bulky for the railways, and so was conveyed to London by road, by Pickfords. The journey occupied eleven days.

From the leads over the west front of the Cathedral, a close acquaintance with the gigantic stone statues of St. Paul, St. James and St. Peter can be gained, and a rather horrifying impression of the ravages of the weather on them remains a gruesome memory. They look less like apostles than bad nightmares, and you will be lucky if you don't have troubled dreams of them. One of the much-talked-of curiosities of St. Paul's is the Geometrical Staircase, a circular stone stairway winding round the interior of the south-western tower, each of whose ninety steps is supported on the other. The staircase is not now shown, and it is not beautiful, being just an example of the merely mathematical side of Wren's mind.

Occasionally the announcement finds its way into the newspapers that the Bishop of London has appointed a clergyman to the prebend of such-and-such a place. Often these place-names are so entirely unfamiliar as to be absolutely mysterious. They are of extremely ancient origin. There are thirty prebends attached to St. Paul's Cathedral, held each by a clergyman who on appointment becomes a 'Prebendary.' They take us back to those times when pious laymen bequeathed manors to the Church. When a Prebendary was appointed to a stall he became lord of the manor of the particular property which formed its endowment, and enjoyed its revenue. Upon the office of the Ecclesiastical Commissioners being established,

however, all the episcopal and capitular estates were pooled, a lump sum of £20,000 being handed back to the Dean and Chapter of the Cathedral for the payment of all salaries and expenses. The holding of a prebendal stall is now purely honorary, the proceeds from the endowments being paid to the Commissioners. How valuable some of the properties have become may be judged from the fact that the prebendal stall of Finsbury, the richest of all, is worth £200,000 per annum.

Great play has long been made in the sport of holding up Henry the Eighth to odium because of his dealings with the Church and Church properties, but modern investigators of confiscation and spoliation might better expend their fury on the doings of the Ecclesiastical Commissioners, who have made the hardest of hard bargains with all Church authorities and handle enormous revenues that historically do not belong to them. If the Dean and Chapter of St. Paul's still owned their manors, there would not now be any necessity to appeal for funds in repairing the Cathedral.

We have most of us heard of the famous reply, that was not an explanation, when a Church dignitary was asked what were the duties of an Archdeacon. He said they were "the performance of Archidiaconal functions." The enquirer went away no wiser, which no doubt was that distinguished cleric's intention. Similarly, we may be curious to know what constitute the functions of a Prebendary. Apparently they consist chiefly of attending in a choir-stall and

repeating at service every day a portion of the Psalter. This explains the Latin line which can be seen inscribed by the side of the name on each stall in St. Paul's Cathedral. The thirty Prebendaries were (and, as a matter of fact, still are) supposed to repeat the whole of the Psalter every day, and the line on the stall is the first line of the Psalm which falls to the share of its holder for daily repetition.

There are thirty prebendal stalls in the choir, each one with the name of the prebend, or manor, in gilt letters on the woodwork. They are :

Cadyngton Major	Oxgate
Cadyngton Minor	Twyford
Sneating	Pancras
Consumpta per Mare	Rugmere
Ealdland	Totenhall (Tottenham)
Weldland	Cantlern (Kentish Town)
Reculvers Land	Isledon
Chiswick	Newington
Willesden	Holborn
Bromesbury	Portpool
Brownswood	Finsbury
Chamberlain's Wood	Hoxton
Mapesbury	Wenlock's Barn
Neasden	Mora
Harlesden	Eald Street

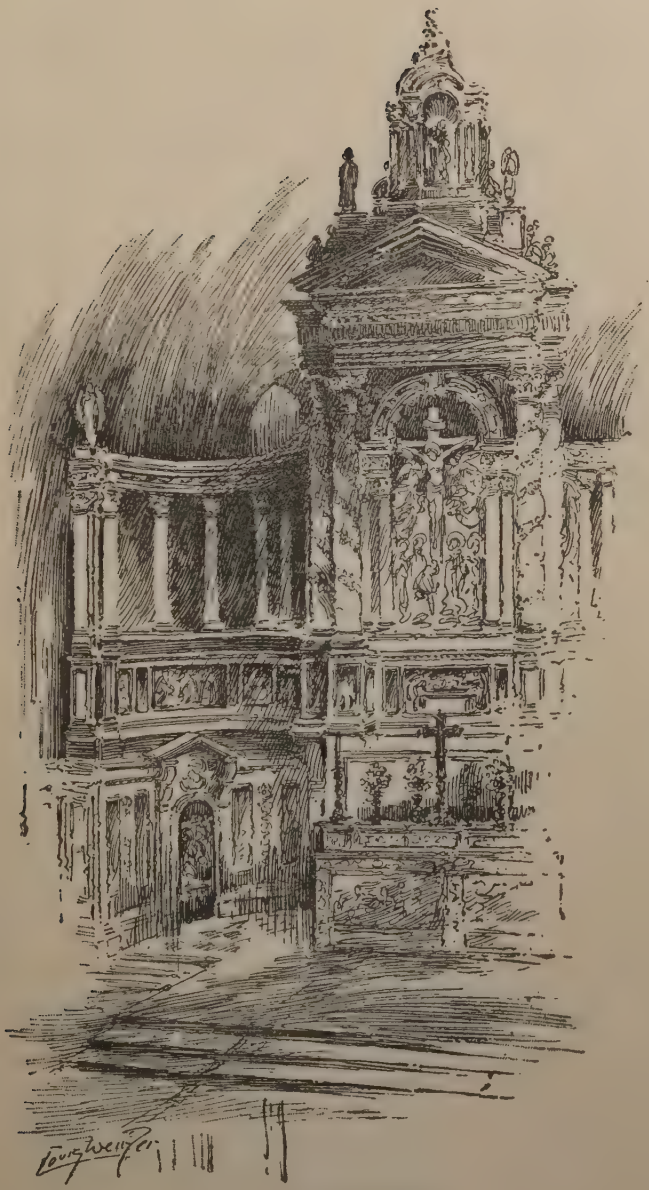
Most of these manors are on the outskirts of London. That of Willesden was anciently a 'Peculiar' jurisdiction of the Archbishop of

Canterbury. It included the prebends of Mapesbury, Twyford and Brownswood. 'Rugmere' was the name of a pond or lake, afterwards a marsh, existing in ancient times on the site of the present New Oxford Street, a thoroughfare driven in 1847 through a maze of slums called "St. Giles' Rookery." The olden existence of this pond determined the curiously crooked original line of High Holborn, which was the old, and once the only, road east and west, continued along Broad Street and High Street, St. Giles's, where this crooked route resumes into Oxford Street, at the corner of Tottenham Court Road, its westward way.

'Portpool' is the region of Gray's Inn Road. 'Bromesbury' is Brondesbury; 'Eald Street' is Old Street, St. Luke's; 'Mora' is Moorfields.

That most curiously named of all these manors, 'Consumpta per Mare,' disappeared so long ago as about 1066, when the land was washed away by the sea. It was a part of those estates given by King Ethelbert in the ninth century, and was situated in Essex. This and other manors were in the region of Walton-on-the-Naze, or 'Adulvernasa.' 'Reculversland' was at the neighbouring Tillingham, as also was 'Sneating,' 'Weldland' and 'Ealdland.' Caddington Major and Minor are in Bedfordshire.

We have better ordered public conduct in Wren's St. Paul's than did our ancestors in the former Cathedral, but it cannot be ignored that this House of God is equally a show, or perhaps



THE REREDOS

more so, for very many people. Pope, the waspish eighteenth-century poet, was satirical at the expense of those who:

> "To church repair
> More for the music than the doctrine there"

and he would have his opportunity to-day in respect of parish churches in the City and elsewhere, which seek to draw congregations by lantern-lectures on topical subjects and by organ recitals. Still more would he find his chance in viewing the crowds who enter St. Paul's Cathedral solely as a museum of architectural and monumental curiosities.

We should not forget that the present St. Paul's has not always been freely open as to the nave and aisles. It was not, indeed, accessible, except at times of divine service, until after 1841, when the Dean and Chapter proposed to throw open the doors continuously throughout the day. This proposition was bitterly, but unsuccessfully, opposed by none other than the generally liberal-minded Sydney Smith, the witty Canon of the Cathedral, who anticipated in this proposed public access a renewal of ancient scandals. The Cathedral would become, he said, as it had been in times past, "a place of assignation for all the worst characters in the metropolis, it would be a Royal Exchange for wickedness, as the other Royal Exchange is for commerce."

Indeed, not only was the Cathedral thus formerly closed, but it was actually secluded from

approach, behind a dwarf wall and high and extremely massive iron railings. These were made at Lamberhurst, on the borders of Kent and Sussex, when that region was one of iron furnaces. The railings, of which some portions yet remain, weighed 200 tons, and cost £11,202. Originally the wall and railings extended in a wide sweep in front of the Cathedral. The line of them is marked by the low polished granite posts set up in their place when the clumsy enclosure was removed in 1873.

In 1874, a Canadian from Toronto, named Howard, being on a visit to London, purchased the discarded railings from an iron merchant, and had them shipped to Canada, intending them to serve as an enclosure for his tomb. The *Delta*, the ship carrying this odd cargo, was, however, wrecked in the St. Lawrence River. But Howard was not to be deprived of his property, and he recovered some eighty feet of the railings by employing divers; and there they are set up, round his resting-place, as intended, with an explanatory inscription:

> "St. Paul's Cathedral for 160 years I did enclose:
> Oh! stranger, look with reverence.
> Man! man! unstable man!
> It was thou who caused the severance!"

—the only known poem of Howard. Nor do we yearn for more.

The Whispering Gallery, around the internal circumference of the base of the dome, is a circuit

of 420 feet. It is the most popular of the Cathedral's curiosities, and an attendant is always seated there to exploit its singular feature to visitors, who are desired to proceed to the other side of the Gallery—a considerable distance—and listen against the stone wall. He then whispers, generally a résumé of the chief facts about the building, and it is repeated, far away, not exactly in thunderous tones, but in a loud voice. According to some accounts, this curiosity was designed by Wren, but it is surely much more reasonable to suppose it to be sheer chance.

In the crypt is the Chapel of St. Faith, representing the former parish church of St. Faith-under-St. Paul's, whose origin is curious enough. Anciently the parish church of St. Faith stood close by the eastern end of the Cathedral, but when that was rebuilt and extended further eastward, towards the close of the thirteenth century, the church was taken down and its site incorporated with the Cathedral, an arrangement being made with the parishioners of St. Faith that they should have a church in the crypt. It was to this subterranean church that, on the outbreak of the Great Fire, the terrified citizens brought their most valued possessions, believing that to be the one safe place. Actually it proved the most dangerous, for the molten lead of the roofs of the burning Cathedral penetrated even there, and consumed everything.

It is in this present vast and gruesome crypt that not only the military and naval heroes lie

but also the painters and other artists, and the war correspondents of the newspapers. The sarcophagus in which does not rest the body of Nelson, is itself a curiosity. The Admiral, as a matter of fact, is buried beneath, within a coffin made of the timber from the mast of the French battleship, *Orient*, destroyed at the Battle of Abou Kir. The great sarcophagus, the work of Benedetto da Ravezzano, was made for Cardinal Wolsey, but on the fall of that great man, who lies in some unknown spot on the site of Leicester Abbey, it was annexed by Henry the Eighth, for himself. He caused it to be adorned with elaborate bronze decorations, but they disappeared, and the sarcophagus lay neglected in St. George's Chapel, Windsor, until it occurred to some bright spirit, at the time of Nelson's death, that it was just the thing required.

All the past Presidents of the Royal Academy lie in the crypt. It must be rather a solemn thought for P.R.A.'s that their dungeon-like place is inevitably waiting for them, and perhaps, some day, a President will break the tradition, and leave instructions for a refusal. What originated the custom seems obscure. Turner, who raised no objection, did, however, will that he should be buried with his picture, 'Carthage,' wrapped round him. That was disregarded and the picture can be seen to this day in the National Gallery.

The visitors, even, to the Cathedral have sometimes been as curious as anything else

within the building. Sir George Birdwood, the distinguished founder of the Primrose League, was accustomed to describe how in September, 1907, he saw a group of women from the provinces rubbing their shoulders against one of the pillars of the nave. Asked by a lady, one of a number of interested spectators of this singular act, why they were doing that, one of them replied, 'Lor', ma'am, don't you know that if you don't come up to London and rub yourself against St. Paul's, at least once in your lifetime, you'll live childless and die a fool?"

Sir George thought he traced this extraordinary belief to an Oriental origin. It was, he said, a rite similar to a very popular one in the Saiva worship of western India, and he assumed this St. Paul's superstition to have been transmitted from the days of the very earliest pagan temple on this site, and perhaps from those of a yet earlier pillar.

CHAPTER XIV

THE MONUMENT

THE Monument! What monument? Well, there is only one in London so called, although there are thousands of others. And this has that simplicity of fame which permits a railway station to be named after it.

It is the Monument recording the Great Fire of London in 1666. Every country-cousin knows it, every Londoner is familiar with the appearance of it. Most visitors to London climb its many stairs; there are 345 of them, and they wind round and round the interior of that lofty pillar until the climber of them feels his chest bursting and his heart thumping like a gas-engine. If the City Corporation were to install a lift, it would be at once a convenience and would soon pay for itself in an immense increase of visitors.

But, as it is, Londoners know the exterior well enough, but not many of them have made acquaintance with that staircase. The typical Londoner takes his London on trust and does not see more of its sights than come his way in the course of his daily business.

THE MONUMENT

The Monument is open daily between 9 a.m. and 4 p.m., and the small sum of threepence makes you free of it. But first let us look at it from without.

The great plinth, or base, from which the sturdy column of Portland stone rises to its height of 202 feet, is one of the works of Wren, and was built by the express desire of Charles the Second. The height was determined by the distance at which it stands from the house of Farynor, the baker, in Pudding Lane, where the Great Fire began, September 3rd, 1666. The Monument was six years in building, 1671-77. A metal vase crested with gilded flames crowns the abacus. An earlier design carried the symbolism much further, for it embodied the idea of conflagration by cresting the column with a phœnix, and providing it with sculptured flames, issuing from holes in all its length.

It has generally been the custom to ridicule the elaborately sculptured group on one side of the plinth, crowded with historical and emblematic figures in high relief; but, as a matter of sheer fact, it is a very bold and impressive work, rendered additionally striking by the weathering of time, and the effects of bleaching here and grime there on the stone. It is an extremely fine specimen of the work of Caius Gabriel Cibber, and entirely characteristic of a period which loved symbolical abstractions, and of the frame of mind in which the citizens of London regarded affairs at the destruction of their City.

The composition has, it is true, a somewhat daunting apocalyptic cast, but the period saw affairs exactly in that way, and the sculptor has fully realised the awe and horror of the destruction and the busy resolution to repair it.

There you see London lying, an unhappy figure, upon her ruins, and Time raising her, with Providence by his side, with a sceptre pointing to angels of Peace and Plenty descending from clouds. On the other side, on an architectural platform, you see Charles the Second, as an ancient Roman, coming to the help of London; so, between the efforts of Time and the King, London seems likely to recover, especially as the King is supported by such powerful coadjutors as the Sciences, Liberty and Architecture, each fully furnished with the appropriate attributes, with Architecture displaying a plan of the new City. The King's brother and successor, James, Duke of York, is there too, with Fortitude leading a lion, and Justice with a laurel crown. Envy squats beneath, amid flame and smoke, and gnawing a heart. In the background, on one side, are seen the citizens, terrified at the Fire; and on the other the rebuilding of the City.

Much of this crowded stage is an allusion to the belief, afterwards held to be unfounded, that the burning of the City was the result of a Popish plot. It is not surprising, if only for the reason that a self-accused person had come forward to confess being the incendiary. This

was one, Robert Hubert, a French priest, twenty-five years of age, from Rouen. He declared he had set light to the baker's house in Pudding Lane, by thrusting a fire-ball at the end of a long pole, into a window. He gave a circumstantial account of a plot and three accomplices. He was tried, on his confession, found guilty and hanged, and it was not until later that he was proved insane, and had not, in fact, landed in England until two days after the Fire.

Thus the Monument long bore the inscription, not, however added until the Titus Oates accusations of 1681 :

" This pillar was set up in perpetual remembrance of that most dreadful burning of this Protestant city, begun and carried on by ye treachery and malice of ye popish factio, in ye beginning of Septem. in ye year of our Lord 1666, in order to ye carrying on their horrid plott for extirpating the Protestant religion and old English liberty, and the introducing popery and slavery.

" Sed furor papisticus qui tam dira petravit nondum restinguitur."

Of course, James the Second saw to it that this long accusation was erased, but in the time of William the Third, " the Protestant Deliverer," it was reinstated, more deeply cut than before. Finally, it was obliterated in 1831.

There was every excuse for the belief that the Fire was the work of incendiaries, for it had been long foretold and expected, sometimes as a

"judgment" upon the sins of London, or as a happening likely enough in a city whose streets and lanes were so narrow, and whose houses were so largely of timber. The times were hysterical and numbers of religious fanatics of every shade of belief paraded London, after the manner of Solomon Eagle, in Harrison Ainsworth's novel, *Old St. Paul's*. That character is not indeed so much an invention as a composite one, drawn by the novelist after reading the tracts and news-letters of that age.

In 1659, a tract had predicted "a consuming fire," and, the year following, another, *A Vision concerning London*, said: "And as for the city herself, and her suburbs, and all that belonged to her, a fire was kindled therein; but she knew not how, even in all her goodly places, and the kindling of it was in the foundation of all her buildings, and there was none could quench it." And so forth, in great and curiously exact detail. But it was a Quaker, and not a Roman Catholic, who wrote that. The Quakers, above all others, were possessed of a sense of right and imagined themselves to be clothed in the mantle of prophecy, as indeed, in the event, they seem to have been.

But more to the point was the actual Republican plot for which eight conspirators were hanged, drawn and quartered in April, 1666, only five months before the Fire. They were John Rathbone, a former colonel in Cromwell's army, and other soldiers. They had designed to assassinate the King and to restore the Common-

wealth. Among their intentions was that of burning the City. They had consulted Lilly's Almanac, and there had discovered September 3rd to be a propitious day of the grouping of the constellations for their treason. The almost incredible coincidence happened, that the Great Fire actually did, by chance, break out on that date, after the plotters had been sent to their account. It would have been too much to expect that age—or any other—to find merely chance concerned in it.

Londoners have every reason not to explore the interior of the Monument. It is a weary climb, in semi-darkness, and, as you go round and round those clammy walls, the mind is filled with a dreadful fascination by that yawning pit on the other side of the clumsy corkscrew hand-rails: a pit so deep and horrible that it may well be likened to the bottomless pit of Scripture. Nerves? Yes.

And so to the abacus, the capstone or platform above, long ago caged in with iron rails lest some visitor might follow the example of others, long ago, and fling himself over. The last such suicide was in 1845. Long before you reach this height you have heartily agreed with the keeper of the Monument quoted in *Martin Chuzzlewit* that visitors "don't know what a many steps it is. It's worth twice the money to stop below."

Yet the city accounts show the Monument to be a source of profit. In the year April 1st, 1920, to March 31st, 1921, its income was

£738 12s. 11d. : the fees taken being £1,582 3s. 0d., plus sale of a 'History,' £16 13s. 4d.; and the expenses £860 13s. 5d. The Monument is by way of being an increasingly valuable asset, for in 1910 the profit was but £630, and the year before, £590.

"Many visitors?" said the keeper, in answer to an enquiry. "Yes, a goodish few on fine days. Dull ones—well, what do *you* think? A good many ladies and children go up. Sometimes a woman faints, comin' down. She sits down here, and I bring her to. Don't get much thanks for it, though. Sometimes they abuses me like a pickpocket: just as if *I'd* built it. . . . I gen'lly tells 'em no one *arsts* 'em to go up, an' then they says I'm insolent. You *can't* please some people."

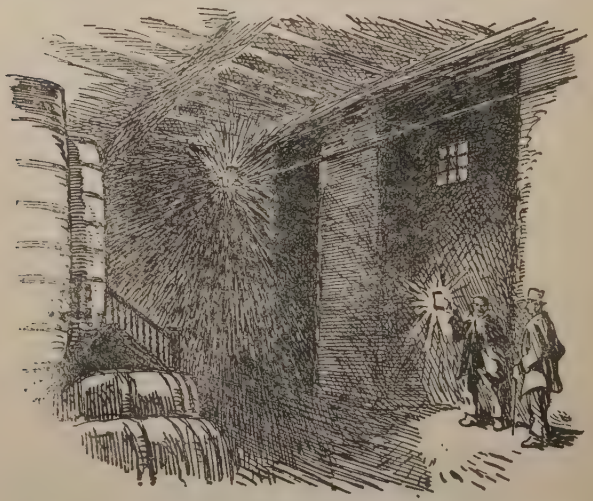
CHAPTER XV

OLD CITY CORNERS AND CUSTOMS

OLDEST among all the ancient vestiges of the builder in the City of London are the fragments that here and there you yet may find of the Roman wall of London. Archæological maps of London show us the course of the Roman Wall and mark the seven gates in it; excavators come upon its foundations, and on the street-level of Roman London, seventeen and eighteen feet below the level of the modern City; and sometimes, when the well of a lift is being made, the iron-hard masonry of the Roman age is struck. I remember exactly such an experience. It was in 1882, when a lift was about to be installed in the back premises in Little Bridge Street, Blackfriars, of Messrs. Trübner & Co., publishers. The masonry then found had to be cut away with chisels.

At what date in the Roman civilisation the present line of the Roman wall was built none can say with any certainty because there are no documents. Nor can we guess whether this was a wall enclosing an area greater than any possible earlier wall. All we certainly know is the line of it. The wall, then, ran from the Thames at Blackfriars to Ludgate, ascended what is now

Little Bridge Street, and turned to the left, along St. Martin's Court, and so by the Old Bailey to Newgate. Thence it turned right, at a bastion whose remains are in an underground chamber in the Post Office yard off Giltspur Street, and



THE ROMAN WALL OF LONDON IN BARBER'S BONDED WAREHOUSE

crossed to Aldersgate Street, making north-east and north of Cripplegate, and thence along London Wall to Bishopsgate, and inside Houndsditch to Aldgate, and finally by America Square to Tower Hill and the Tower, where a large fragment may be seen standing on the east side of the White Tower, to the river again.

Only one extension of the wall was made in

post-Roman times, when the Dominican friars, in 1278, obtained leave to demolish the part between the Thames and Ludgate, and to rebuild it outwards, for the purpose of bringing their establishment within the walls.

There is very much more of the Roman wall remaining than is generally supposed. That is because its fragments are mostly hidden from sight, in basements. But the churchyard of St. Alphege in London Wall shows a long stretch, partly, indeed, the mediæval wall added to the Roman work after the rising ground had buried a considerable depth of the 35 ft. or so which is supposed to have been the height of the Roman circumvallation. A picturesque bastion is seen in the churchyard of St. Giles, Cripplegate; and in the basement of Roman Wall House, No. 1 Crutched Friars, is another piece. But the most curious and complete length is to be found in the extensive wine vaults of Barber's Bonded Warehouse, Coopers' Row, by the Minories. There, in the deep gloom in which, with the aid of infrequent incandescent lights, and with an oil hand-lamp, the Roman masonry is seen to form the basis of one wall of the great building. On its bulwarks, where in ancient times the Roman sentry paced, the eighteenth-century builder reared his monstrous brick building for the wine and spirit warehousemen; and so, dimly you see it to-day, amid the huge shapes of vats, whose contents would be enough to drown you, should they burst.

The City keeps much else besides its Roman wall, although, officially, it cares for none of these things. In the eighteenth century it sold the

ALDGATE PUMP

City gates, and so why it retains Aldgate Pump seems a mystery. Does anyone remember the old City phrase, "a draft on Aldgate Pump," for a bad note?

Here stood Ald Gate, just to the east of St. Katherine Cree church. When the east window

of this church was restored, in 1920, something of a shock was received on discovering the sentiments inscribed on it by a workman who had cleaned it over a hundred years before. He had written "Thomas Jordan cleaned this window, and damn the job, I say—1815." This 'human document,' so expressive of the unchanging feelings of the British workman, is extremely precious.

Many have sought but none shall find the origin of the Dutch eel-boats' custom of anchoring in the Thames between Billingsgate and the Custom House. Generally there are two or three of these 'Schuyts' at this olden mooring ('skoots' is the Dutch pronunciation), and never is there less than one. The popular idea always has been that the 'right,' prescriptive or chartered, assumed to be held by the Dutch skippers will be invalidated whenever the berth is left unoccupied; but that is a popular fallacy. The Dutch eel importers of to-day, whose outlandish vessels we see here are just the long-descended fellows of those who certainly were accustomed to come thus into London River in the time of Henry the Fifth, and whom the City in some way sought to control in 1412. They anchor here, being a conservative race, because their ancestors did the same; and it is, therefore, an astonishing thing to note that, at this time of writing, the Dutchmen's conservatism has so far broken down that these quaint-looking old-fashioned ships are presently to be replaced by

motor-vessels. In this, however, you have another Dutch characteristic warring with the

Doorway of Joiners' Hall

conservative one; and that is the national frugality and keenness for business matters. It has been demonstrated to the Dutch skippers that more business can be done, and more cheaply, by the

aid of motor-boats; and so, perhaps even by the time these words are printed, the old style of vessel is to go.

So do the ancient and venerable things pass. But there are plenty others left, and, although institutions decay, the relics of them often remain. I am reminded of this by the sight, in a narrow alley off Upper Thames Street, called Joiners' Hall Buildings, of an old and curious door-way that evidently was once the entrance to something of more importance than the warehouses within. Here was, in fact, Joiners' Hall. The Company of Joiners, whose Hall this was, had their old one burnt in the Great Fire of 1666, and again in 1694, when it was rebuilt. In 1679, the Joiners began that practice of letting their Hall which has been followed ever since. A congregation of Particular Baptists then rented it. This so annoyed the authorities that the Company of Joiners were prosecuted for permitting a private conventicle to be held on the premises. But preaching of sorts went on. In 1733, an eccentric person, one Jacob Ilive, gave an address here on the plurality of worlds, and held that this earth is hell and the souls of men are apostate angels. The books of the Company under date of Nov. 11th, 1799, give us the date from which the present warehouse phase begins: "The Hall agreed to be let as a warehouse."

The gateway bears, somewhat the worse for age, two demi-savages, a portion of the Company's arms.

If you happen to be passing this spot on a morning of July, generally about the 9th of the month, Upper Thames Street will be found in an attitude of amused curiosity, and, if you wait to see what is to happen, a procession will be observed issuing from the Hall of the Vintners' Company. It proceeds to the Church of St. Michael, Paternoster Royal, preceded by four men in short white smocks and silk hats, who sweep the roadway with besoms, as they go. It is not a sweeping of necessity, because for centuries past the City's streets have been fairly clean; but in some far-off time, when, as now, the Master and Wardens and the Livery of the Worshipful Company of Vintners repaired to the church for the installation of Master and his coadjutors, to sweep a way must have been needed. The Vintners, it seems, have never forgotten that. A stranger from another land might even think they had not observed the thoroughfares of to-day to be swept, but he would be wrong. We simply hate to discontinue anything, and so, annually, those sweepers continue to sweep away nothing, and the Vintners, carrying as of old, posies in their hands, may go cleanly to church.

The railway bridge across the lower end of Ludgate Hill has always been violently condemned. No one seems ever to have had for it anything but abuse and contempt. "That monstrosity of ugliness, that black spot upon the view to be had of St. Paul's from Fleet Street

and Ludgate Circus—the bridge for the London, Chatham and Dover Railway." That is a specimen description. As a matter of fact, it is a handsome bridge, and the critics of it have become somewhat mixed in their indignation at its situation there and in considering the actual design of it. The real and only point is the placing there at all of almost the only railway bridge in the City of London, and, if there were to be a railway at all to Holborn Viaduct and Snow Hill, from across the river at Blackfriars, a bridge of some sort was a necessity. It dates from 1863. The railway itself, and portions of Blackfriars Station, stand upon the site of the notorious Fleet Prison, for which the railway company paid £60,000.

The real reason of the objections to the railway bridge, just above Ludgate Circus, is found in its coming in front of the view of St. Paul's Cathedral. But it is not so sure a thing that the bridge actually is objectionable, even so. Just as the slender leaded spire of St. Martin's, Ludgate, serves to give scale and majesty to the dome of St. Paul's, so does the railway bridge, with the steam and smoke of passing trains. It is thought that Sir Christopher Wren purposely designed St. Martin's needle-like spire exactly to serve as a foil to his St. Paul's dome. It does so serve, but probably Wren never considered the matter. And certainly those who installed the railway bridge had no such thoughts, although they provided an exceptionally handsome

and ornate design. But actually there is a piquant and a pleasing contrast afforded in the view by this typical evidence of the busy commercial life of London and the aloof grandeur of the Cathedral.

There was no 'Ludgate Circus' until 1870. Until that time Fleet Street, Ludgate Hill,

THE VINTNERS' STREET-SWEEPING

Farringdon Street and what is now New Bridge Street met in a narrow four-square intersection. Two obelisks stand in the Circus, on one of those 'refuges' now, in the presence of traffic, so greatly needed for the safety of pedestrians. One of them is to Robert Waithman, linen draper, alderman and sheriff in 1821, Lord Mayor 1823-24, and, in five Parliaments, Member for the City. It is amusing, in face of the hurry and never resting gait of wayfarers here, in these

times, to recall that formerly, in the middle of the road, between two lamp-posts, was placed a seat, with a high back, for the weary. It bore the inscription: "Rest, but do not loiter."

Another queer item of almost forgotten lore: it was at the corner of Fleet Street and Farringdon Street that the first official post-office pillar-box was installed, in March, 1855.

St. Martin's-le-Grand is the great General Post Office centre, extending of later years into Newgate Street and into Smithfield, and occupying the old site of Christ's Hospital, the familiar "Bluecoat School." Until 1829, the General Post Office was situated in Lombard Street, and from that point set out the mail-coaches until that year, when the establishment was transferred to the newly completed General Post Office building by Smirke, demolished in 1912. The site of it is still vacant. The 'West' block of Post Office buildings, opposite, dates from 1870-73, and has a return frontage to Newgate Street. The building is devoted chiefly to the telegraph department. In common with the other neighbouring great post office buildings, it is hugely solid, but of no architectural merit. It was designed by an Office of Works draughtsman, and was opened by the then First Commissioner of Works, Professor Ayrton, who remarked on that occasion, in reply to severe criticisms on the style of the building, that it was a "specimen of the Post Office Order of Architecture, and a very good example of its kind."

As no one ever suspected, or accused that much disliked member of the then Government of humour, it is only to be supposed that the phrase "Post Office Order," as applied to architecture, was an unintentioned witticism. We may well agree with that forgotten First Commissioner that it is a specimen of official architecture, only with the emendation that it is a "characteristic," rather than a "good" specimen.

The block officially styled "G.P.O. North," across Bull and Mouth Street, was built in 1889-96. It houses the Postmaster-General and the administrative staff, and contains, little known to the public, a very interesting Post Office Museum, full of curious relics in the history of the Post. "G.P.O. North" was in course of building when Cecil Raikes and Arnold Morley were Postmasters-General, and it thus seemed good to the architect to have the two keystones of the main entrance archway sculptured with portrait-heads of them. Time and grime have so dealt with those sculptured heads that an impression might well be received that Postmasters-General in the last years of Queen Victoria had abjured soap and water. The head of Cecil Raikes is the bearded one facing the street; that of Arnold Morley is on the inner arch. It represents him clean-shaven, or did so, but it is now so extremely dirty that his condition is a little difficult to determine. We should all be like that if we also had been out all night during so many years.

CHAPTER XVI

LONDON CITY VANES

They are nearly all vanes in the City of London, and even on the steeple of St. Peter, Cornhill, where perhaps we might have expected to find the typical chanticleer, it is a weather-vane, instead, which shows the way the wind blows. It takes the form of a huge key, the symbol of St. Peter, standing on its bow.

The hurrying crowds of London are far too busy to notice what manner of device crests the towers and spires of the churches and public buildings of the City. They are too intent upon getting through the day's work, and avoiding collisions with every other hastening person. So, if you would notice at leisure and with some degree of personal safety these singular adornments of the sky-line, it is on Sundays and days of public holiday you must do it. On such occasions the City is empty, save for a few boys roller-skating in the smooth, asphalt-paved streets, and a few extremely bored City policemen.

The weather-vanes of that square mile which constitutes the City of London are a numerous and eccentric company. Most famous of them all

are the dragon of Bow Church and the grasshopper of the Royal Exchange. The great gilded grasshopper is the badge of Sir Thomas Gresham, who flourished in the reign of Queen Elizabeth. He is said to have adopted it because

a grasshopper attracted the notice and assistance of a wayfarer to him when he was a boy.

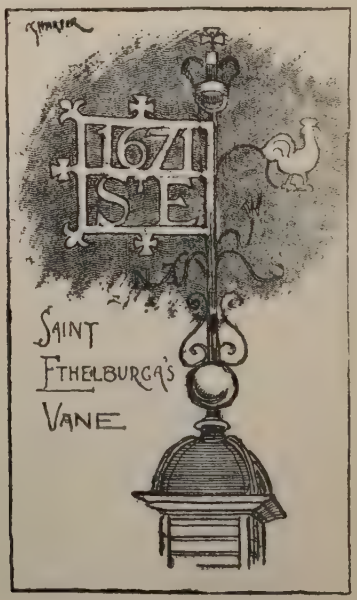
That probably is only a legend. But on the tower of the first Royal Exchange, built by him when a merchant prince and Lord Mayor, he placed a grasshopper vane. His Royal Exchange

was burned down in the Great Fire of London in 1666. Another vane of the like design crested the second Royal Exchange, which in its turn was burned, January 10th, 1838. But on that occasion the Grasshopper did not perish, and it is there to this day, on the cupola of the present

building, which was opened by Queen Victoria, October 28th, 1844.

An old prophecy by the famous "Mother Shipton" hints of the doings when the Dragon of St. Mary-le-Bow and the Grasshopper shall meet. It seems the unlikeliest thing to happen, that they shall both descend at the same time;

the gilded Dragon from his perch 235 feet above Cheapside, and the Grasshopper from the Royal Exchange; and then foregather. But this unlikely happening actually has more than once come to pass, and no disasters were reported.



It was about sixty years ago that both were removed, and met in the same workshop.

Several curious allusions are made to the Dragon of Bow Church. Dean Swift, in his "Wonderful Prophecy," says that it and the Grasshopper, "shall meet together upon Stocks Market and shake hands like brethren."

Again, we find Swift saying that "when the Dragon on Bow Church kisses the Cock behind the Exchange, great changes will take place in England." The "Cock behind the Exchange" was perhaps the weathercock of the Church of St. Bartholomew-by-the-Exchange, long since removed. Haydon in his "Table Talk" says, "Just before the Reform Bill of 1832 the Dragon and the Cock were both taken down at the same time to be cleaned and repaired by the same man, and were placed close to each other. In fact the Dragon kissed the Cock, and the Reform Bill was passed."

Not once, but several times, has the Dragon come down. He is 10 feet in length. One occasion was Michaelmas Day, 1820, when a young Irishman, one Michael Burke, descended on its back, pushing with his feet from the cornices and scaffolding, in the presence of thousands of spectators.

Oldest among the city vanes is that of St. Ethelburga, in Bishopsgate Street, dated 1671, with the initials "St. E." A strange-looking rooster occupies the tail-end. The great gilded ship vane formerly surmounting the steeple of St. Michael, Queenhithe, was removed when that church was demolished, and is now on the roof of St. James Garlickhithe vicarage, in Thames Street.

St. Lawrence Jewry, in Guildhall Yard and Gresham Street, has for a vane a gridiron, the well-known symbol of that saint. I have climbed

to that gridiron and have twirled it round with my

St. Lawrence Jewry Vane

hand. It was done a good many years ago, when repairs and regilding were in progress. I shall

never do it again, in actual fact, although sometimes I repeat it in my dreams. For, truly, it was no difficult matter to ascend, and then to stand on a narrow staging, being shown from it the panorama of the City below; but to descend, by an overhanging ladder, was an affair of difficulty. I wished the climb had never been made, and I envied the workmen there, who took it all as a matter of course.

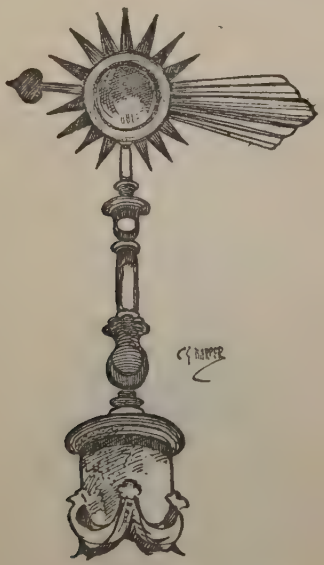
The vane of St. Mildred, Bread Street, is heraldic, bearing a shield charged with a chevron with five horseshoes and the Red Hand of Ulster.

So many of the City of London churches have been demolished that the existing ones in some cases represent more than one parish. St. Martin's on Ludgate Hill serves for five. The church with the vane surmounted by a gigantic capital letter A, hard by the vacant site of the General Post Office in St. Martin's-le-Grand, is St. Ann-in-the-Willows, and it represents also the vanished church of St. John Zachary, one of those not rebuilt after the Great Fire. Not merely have several City churches been demolished in late years, but two have been remodelled and used as offices. One of these is St. Michael, Wood Street, at the corner of Huggin Lane, and the other St. Olave Jewry, whose tower survives. Within is the gilded ship-vane which once belonged to Wren's charming little church of St. Mildred-in-the-Poultry. This little building, on which that great architect lavished much care, was sold for the sake of its valuable site, in

1875. The stones of it were bought at auction by Lewis Fytche, F.S.A., and taken down to Lincolnshire, where he intended to rebuild the church in his park at Thorpe Hall, near Louth. But the work was never done, and the stones seem to have disappeared.

The four vanes on the White Tower of the Tower of London each bear the St. George's Cross. Away in the south, across the river, you may see in fine weather that curious church tower of St. John, Horsleydown: one of those queer eighteenth-century churches which seem to have been the especial feature of that rather

pagan era. The steeple is in the form of an immense fluted classical column. It is the sole architectural feature in all the depressing region of Bermondsey and Spa Road; a district of mean streets and little drab houses, intensely respect-



ST. JOHN'S, HORSLEYDOWN

able but dull. But, although a feature, it is at the same time an architectural freak, this column supporting nothing in the way of a building. It just forms the basis for a festooned plinth supporting a great gilt weather-vane in the shape of a comet.

A little way west of the City, you see the curious

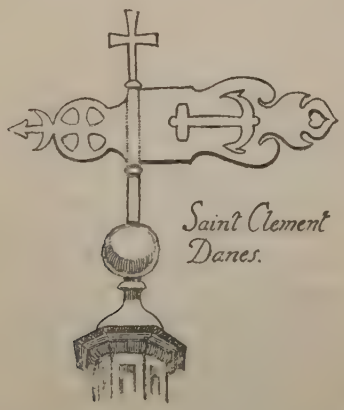
vane of the Inner Temple Hall and Library. It is in the form of that winged Pegasus which is the badge of that home of lawyers; that winged horse of classic fancy associated rather with poetry than with the law.

Across Holborn, in that other hive of legal

activities, Gray's Inn, the hall of that "Honourable Society," as humorously they style themselves, is crested with a vane like a banneret, with what looks like some tutelary imp perched on the top. It is a griffin, the crest of the Inn.

London outside the City lacks the queer fancies of that centre in the matter of vanes; and

when you have passed into the Strand, or by the Church of St. Clement Danes, almost the last has been seen of them. But there, on that steeple, is glimpsed the vane with St. Clement's badge, the anchor, pierced through it. There seems to be only one other interesting vane of



unusual design in all London, and that is up river at that dignified residence of the Archbishop of Canterbury, Lambeth Palace, opposite the Houses of Parliament. It is the ancient wrought-iron vane, crested with a bishop's mitre, which gives a decorative finish to the lantern over the roof of Juxon's library building.

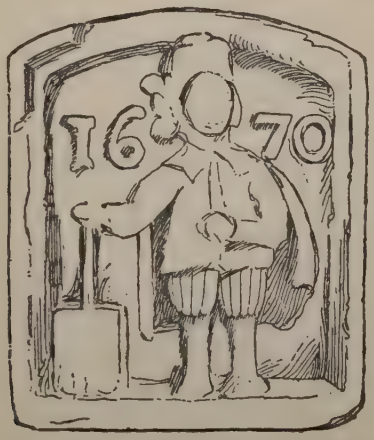
CHAPTER XVII

OLD LONDON STREETS AND STREET TABLETS

LONDON is for always rebuilding itself, and old streets disappear so quietly and swiftly that those visitors who have not for some years revisited the great city which sprawls for over ten miles from east to west, and from north to south, find it somewhat difficult to recognise certain localities. You must seek some of the minor old landmarks in museums. Thus, those among us who remember Sir Paul Pindar's timber-fronted Elizabethan house in Bishopsgate Street and look with disfavour upon the modern commercial buildings where it stood may find that curious old front in the South Kensington Museum. There it stands, looking in the great galleries of that very large-scale building so small, so insignificant, that it seems more like a doll's house than the sometime residence of a notable City man in the reign of Good Queen Bess.

And most of the quaint seventeenth and eighteenth-century street tablets have also been retired, and have become museum specimens. The reader may at this point ask, "What is a street tablet?" By this term is meant one of

the more or less decorative devices or inscriptions in stone which, in days before the coming of those bald and matter-of-fact signs which now proclaim street names, informed strangers of their whereabouts. The oldest and the most curious among these have no inscription at all, but are boldly sculptured with some easily recognisable object



Street Tablet, Gardener's Lane

illustrating, wherever possible, the name of street or lane. Thus, in the darkling crypt of the Guildhall museum, in the City, there is a stone tablet dated 1670, bearing the figure of a man holding a spade. Weather or accident has deprived him of the features of his face, which now exhibits a complete blank; but the spade in his right hand, a very fine and large instrument, even if the haft of it be inconveniently short for

any practical use, is sufficiently in evidence. The reason for this short haft is obviously because the sculptor has given the man absurdly short legs. We should not nowadays recognise this figure as that of a gardener, and it is more than a little difficult to believe that, even in the seventeenth century, working gardeners went forth to dig in this sort of a costume, and wearing a hat looking like the head-dress of a soldier in a Highland regiment. But this tablet and this figure proclaimed that the thoroughfare in which it was once to be found was " Gardener's " Lane. In short, this is a specimen of those pictorial street tablets intended for those people who could not read. The illiterate class was then an extremely large one.

The best known among these sculptured pictorial street signs is one that still stands more or less where it did, in Panyer Alley, a narrow passage between Newgate Street and Paternoster Row. It has become so weathered and then daubed with successive coats of paint that it is now a little difficult to make out. Instead of, as usual, being placed high overhead, on the frontage of a corner house, it stands beside the pavement, and thus has acquired a good deal of ill-usage since first placed there, in 1688. Panyer Alley was then a place where bakers congregated, and whence they set forth on their rounds with their loaves in pannier-baskets. Hence the rude representation of such a basket on which the little " Boy of Panyer Alley," as he is called,

is seen to be sitting. The boy—as indeed would most little boys—would be better for a little scrubbing. The inscription stating that "When you have sovght the Citty rovnd yet still Ths is the Highst Grovnd" is not strictly accurate. In point of fact, the level is two feet higher in Cannon Street.

The "Four Doves Alley" tablet in the Guildhall museum is a further example of this pictorial method, but it has also an inscription, for those who could read: "This 4 Dove Ally 1670"; possibly, we may think, because the

FOUR DOVE ALLEY TABLET

doves look, not like doves, but uncommonly like hawks, which is unfortunate. This little passage stood in St. Martin's-le-Grand, where the great buildings of the General Post Office now are.

The street names of the City are a good deal more picturesque than the streets themselves nowadays. There has been too much rebuilding for a great deal of picturesqueness to have survived. But those names are a delight. Addle Hill, Idol Lane, Laurence Pountney Lane, Fye Foot Lane: they invite attention. And Great St. Helens, where stands St. Helen's Church, which has well been styled the "Westminster Abbey of the City." There lie many of the old merchant princes: very princely in their way, who lent great sums to needy monarchs, and very often were not repaid, either in cash or kind. And there is Green Dragon Court, and Green Arbour Court, where you will find neither trees nor dragons, any more than primroses will be discovered growing on Primrose Hill, by Fleet Street; nor the yellow or white or purple iris in Fleur-de-Lis Court. There was once the King's Wardrobe in Wardrobe Court; and probably coals were once sold in Seacoal Lane, off Farringdon Street, in those remote times when all coal was called "sea-coal"; just because the colliers of Newcastle sent their coals by ship instead of by land transport, and also to distinguish the mineral from charcoal.

To those who know anything about the history of London, these old street names and the time-worn tablets are eloquent indeed. That is why we who care for these things somewhat passionately look with sour disfavour upon those City men who some seventy years ago,

when City 'improvements' were being made, took the opportunity of altering the name of Candlewick Street to 'Cannon' Street, because they thought the new style more respectable.

As you go westward from the City, along Holborn, a narrow passage on the left, so narrow that it cannot admit wheeled traffic, leads into Lincoln's Inn Fields. It is called "New Turn-

style," as can be seen by a tablet of seventeenth-century date. The name recalls the turnstiles admitting to country fields and pastures; and here was originally a gate of that kind, in the remote period which children call "ever so long ago." Then, indeed, Lincoln's Inn Fields were actually fields, and not what they have long been, an urban square.

In James Street, Haymarket, will be found a handsome tablet bearing the street's name, dated 1673; and a smaller one of the same type

remains in the much rebuilt Prince's Court, Storey's Gate. So far west as Chelsea, at the corner of Danvers Street, is a tablet dating as far back as 1696, and with an inscription of a rather more quaint character than usual, beginning, as it does, with what we would now consider the entirely superfluous, "This is," and proceeding to inform us who began the building of the street. The preamble "This is" was common to these tablets in the seventeenth century, as will be seen in the accompanying illustration of the John Street example.

London's streets were once a very forest of signs. Those were the days before the houses were numbered. The sign system must have been extremely cumbrous, as we may judge from the advertisement of Dr. James Tilborgh, a medical man, who, in the eighteenth century, advertised that "he liveth at present over against the New Exchange in Bedford Street, Strand, at the sign of the 'Peacock,' where you shall see at night two candles burning within one of the chambers before the balcony, where he may be spoke with, alone, from eight in the morning till ten at night."

A former *Daily News*, of November, 1762, announced that "the signs in Duke Street, St. Martin's Lane, are all taken down and affixed to the fronts of the houses." The City soon followed suit. But it would seem that the first idea of numbering houses arose from the practice of numbering the staircases in the Inns of Court,

which, all alike and not easily distinguished otherwise, greatly needed numbers.

In June, 1764, the numbering system was introduced, beginning with New Burlington Street, Piccadilly, and followed by Lincoln's Inn Fields. A relic of those days before numbers

served to identify houses is still to be seen on the door of No. 45 Berkeley Square, then, as now, the residence of the Earl of Powis. On the door will be noticed an oval brass plate, looking very professional, as it might be that of a doctor or a solicitor, inscribed 'Earl of Powis.' This seems to most observers no more than an eccentricity, but it is not. It is a survival: the only example left of a custom once generally followed.

There are too many changes in London to suit the taste of the connoisseur in curious things. No longer is it possible to astonish a stranger by pointing out "the shortest street in London," as an eccentricity, because, although the street itself remains there, unaltered, it is no longer recognised as a street, and its one and only house is numbered now in another thoroughfare. Thus is the former 'John Street,' leading from Pall Mall into St. James's Square, in which 'No. 1 John Street,' a small house serving the Duke of Norfolk's estate-office, is to be found. But it is now numbered in the Square.

The broadest thoroughfare in London is that truly noble one, Portland Place, north of Regent Street. It is 100 feet in width, an unprecedentedly generous measure, due, not to any large-minded idea of what would now be styled "town-planning," but to an evasion of contract in the spirit, though not to the legal letter of the obligation. Portland Place was laid out in the eighteenth century, by those Adam brothers who built the Adelphi. The centre of the roadway, it will be seen, as you look south, away from Regent's Park, makes directly for that great projecting building, the Langham Hotel; and the thoroughfare of Langham Place, to continue the way on to Regent Street, wriggles round to the left. The history of this strange piece of roadway is found in Lord Foley, the owner of Foley House, formerly standing on the site of the Langham Hotel, having sold the land, including the site of Port-

land Place, then all fields, on that of his mansion, with the express covenant that no building should take place north of his residence. He wished always to enjoy the view of Hampstead to which he had been used. The purchaser saw a loop-hole through that prohibition. It did not forbid building north-east or north-west, and so he planned this exceptionally wide road running due north from Foley House, and built to either side. What Lord Foley said of this scandalous piece

of sharp practice is not recorded. He should have brought an action-at-law, for the courts to decide whether or not the spirit of the contract had been infringed.

London's streets have not gone altogether without poetic references, but it must be admitted that such as I have found have not been altogether flattering to them. Tennyson, in his *In Memoriam*, is not complimentary:

> "Dark house, by which once more I stand
> Here in the long unlovely street,
> Doors, where my heart was used to beat
> So quickly, waiting for a hand."

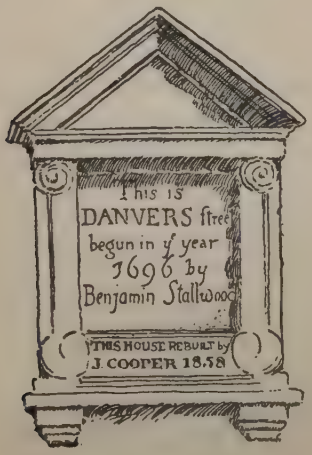
That "long unlovely street" is Welbeck Street, Marylebone, but it would not be difficult to find, in the immediate vicinity, streets longer and more unlovely. Gower Street is a prime specimen alike of length and of dull, drab uniformity; but we cannot agree with Ruskin, who, in his violent way, wrote that it was like a street in Hell, because we have no evidence what that place is like, or even that there can be any streets in it. Moreover, Gower Street, though grey and undistinguished, can scarcely be considered Satanic.

Sackville Street, Piccadilly, retains its olden distinction of being "the only street in London without a lamp-post." This does not mean that it is unlighted, but that the lamps are all bracketed out from the houses.

Pall Mall, although pre-eminently the street of clubs, is not wholly occupied by them. The land there is Crown property, but one freehold exists. It is that on which stands No. 79, the modern building of the Eagle Insurance Company. How this came, exceptionally, to be a freehold is an interesting story. Here in the seventeenth century stood a house in which resided the famous Nell Gwynne. It had a garden running back to the Mall of St. James's Park, and over the garden wall often leaned Mistress Nelly, conversing with her Royal lover, Charles the Second, just as seen in Ward's painting, based as it is on a passage in Evelyn's Diary, March 1st, 1671: "I saw and heard

a very familiar discourse between —— and Mrs. Nelly, as they called an impudent comedian; she looking out of her garden, on a terrace at the top of the Mall, and —— standing on the green walk, under it. I was heartily sorry at the scene."

Charles, thinking himself to be generous,



handed her a Crown lease of house and garden, as a present, but this did not suffice the lady, who threw it back at him, demanding a freehold—and a freehold she obtained.

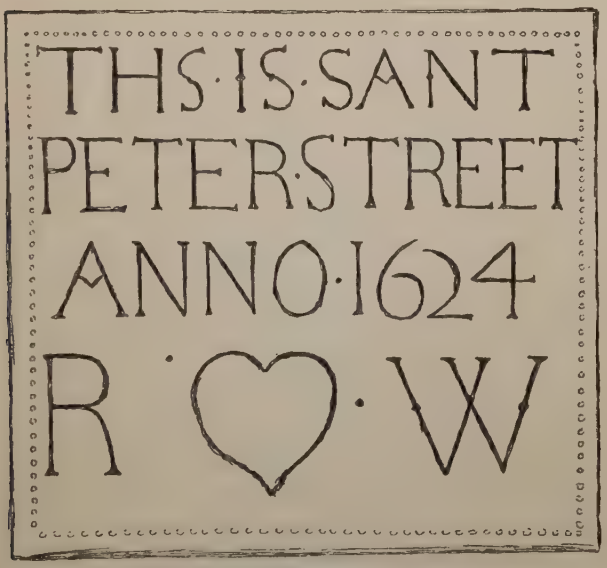
When the London County Council came into existence in 1888, replacing the old Metropolitan Board of Work in authority outside the area of the City of London, which is still ruled by the Lord Mayor and Corporation, one

of its first problems was to reduce the inordinate number of repetitive street names, which caused a good deal of correspondence to be delayed, or to go wrong altogether. Many of the most flagrant examples were renamed. There were then 16 James streets, 19 King streets, 9 Queen streets and 21 Charles streets, in various districts, among numerous other repetitions. These have been somewhat lessened, for there are now but 10; but a good deal of local feeling and opposition had to be reckoned with: the inhabitants of any particular "Charles Street," for example, being usually convinced that any other street of that name elsewhere ought to be rechristened rather than their own. In the case of Charles Street, Westminster, however, the difficulty solved itself by that thoroughfare being required for the site of new Government buildings, and being demolished and abolished altogether.

There were, and still are, several "Market" streets. One in Bloomsbury, near the British Museum, has been renamed "Barter Street," which is distinctly a fancy flight of some exceptionally imaginative official. It would have been called "Sale" Street, but for the fact that there is a street of that name in Paddington.

But London is very conservative in these matters, and, although here and there street names may have been changed, generally those names that were given well over 200 years ago are the names of to-day. Rathbone Place,

Oxford Street, was so named in 1718, when it was built, as proclaimed by a quaint street tablet inscribed " Rathbones Place in Oxford Street "; and Great Peter Street, Westminster, has been called much the same, according to a tablet



A Westminster Street Tablet.

there, reading " This . is . Sant . Peter . Street . Anno . 1624," ever since the ground was built upon. Bird Street, Oxford Street, however, which displays a tablet dated 1725, was long ago renamed " Thomas Street," and Connaught Street, Hyde Park Square, built close upon a

hundred years ago, started in life as "Anderson Street," changed its style to "Upper Berkeley Street," and in 1879 was given its present name by way of compliment to the Duke of Connaught, who was married in that year.